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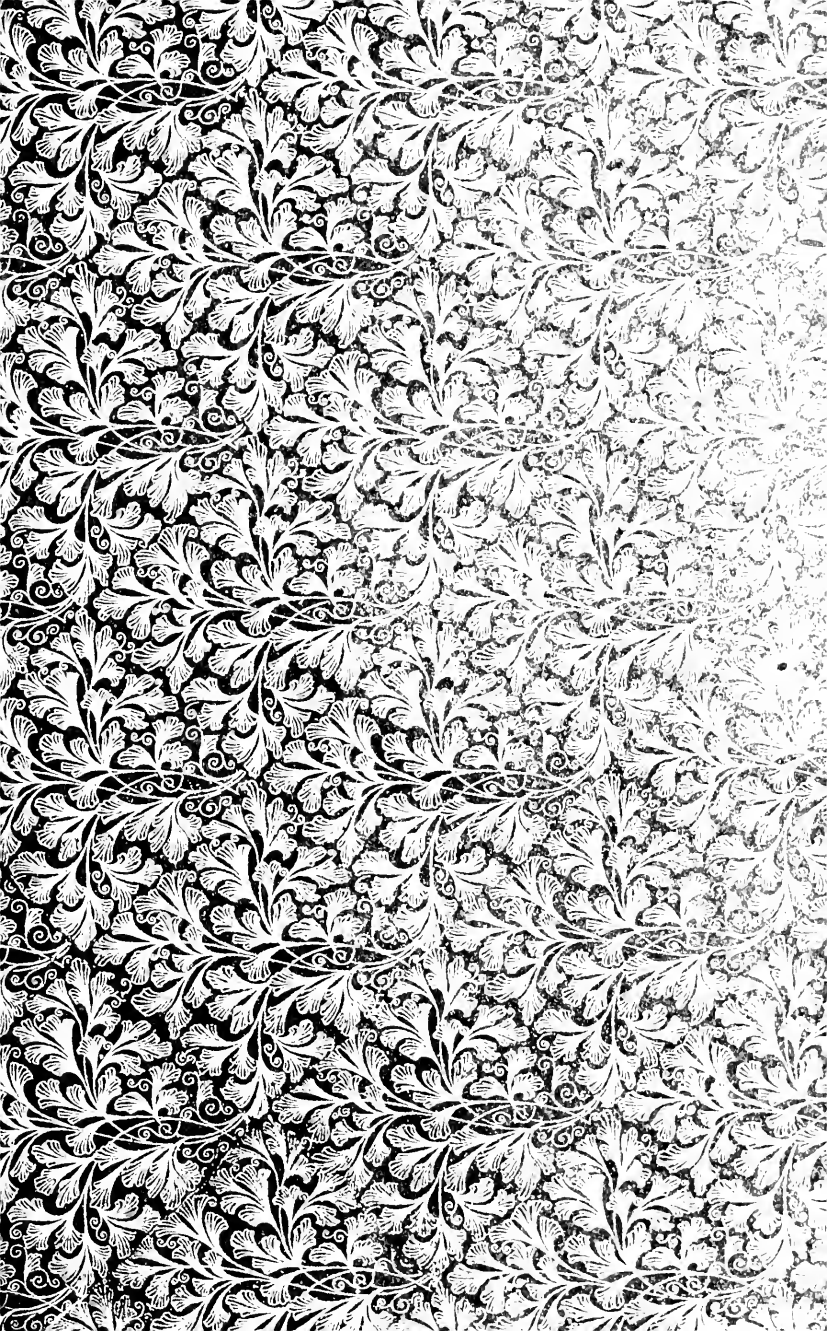
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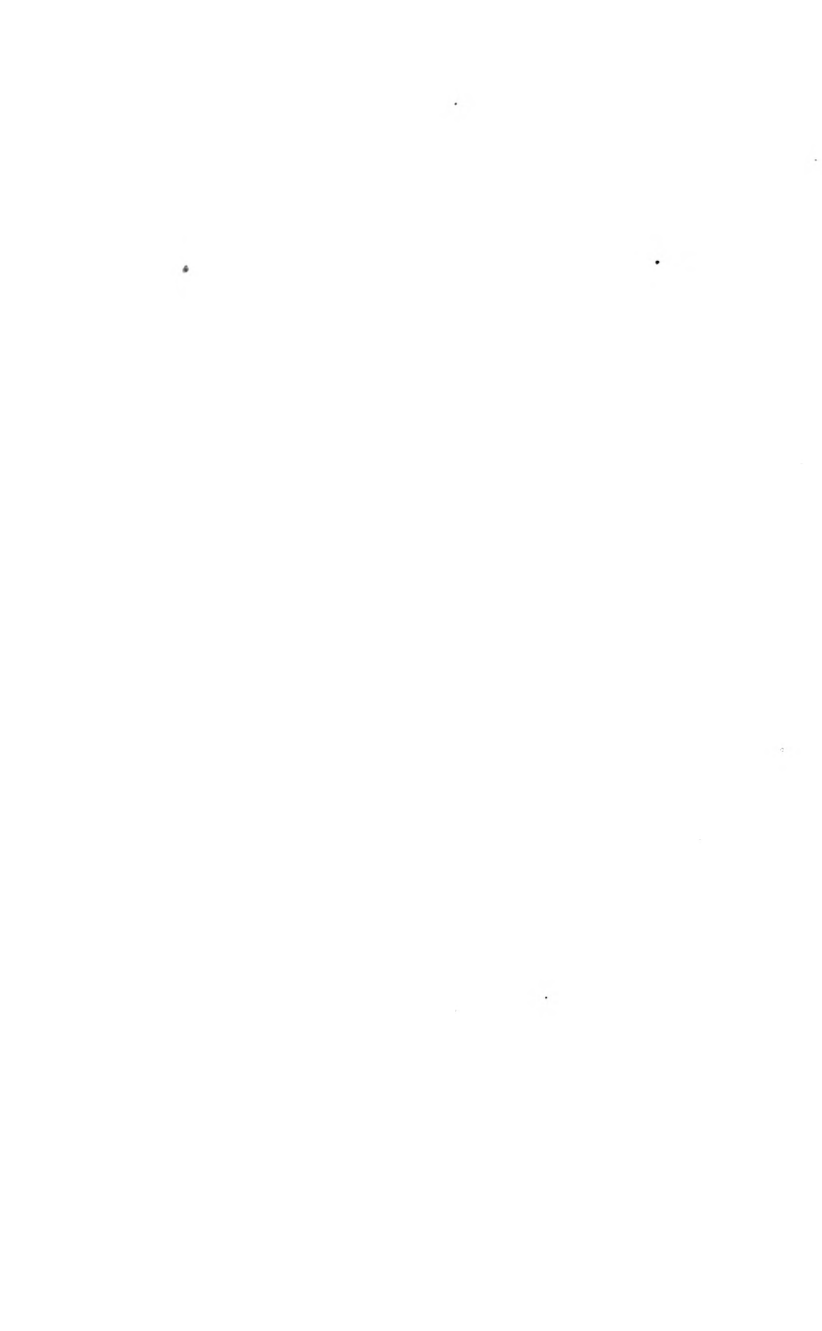
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# FAITH, DOUBT, AND EVIDENCE.

GOD'S VOUCHERS

FOR

HIS WRITTEN WORD,

*WITH CRITICAL ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE  
AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF DR. FRANKLIN.*

BY

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TO THE SOUL," "WINDINGS OF THE RIVER OF LIFE," ETC.

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## PREFACE.

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THE compound title of this volume may need some little explanation. Biography and history are as day-books and ledgers, mutual vouchers for the truth. The Bible is no exception. In Divine Scripture there are the same checks and counter-checks for our assurance, balancing, correcting, and interpreting the accounts. State documents and laws are proved by depositions of personal evidence. Biography and history make up the body of all our knowledge of mankind.

The correlations between the Pentateuch and the Psalms, between the historic books and the prophets, between the occasions and beginnings of laws and observances, and the obedience of the people, and the moulding, discipline, and growth of the national character, are a web of demonstrations such as can not be found in the institutions and histories, the

literature and life, the geography and local peculiarities, or the glory and the crimes and sufferings of any other nation on earth. There is nothing elsewhere approaching it. It is an indisputable, indestructible tissue of laws, promises, warnings, predictions, fulfilments, events, providences, statutes, customs, social and religious institutions, and supernatural sanctions and awards, interwoven under one divine plan; and the unity is a perfect despotism of significance, from the sunlight of which no part can be withdrawn, and under which every book must be interpreted.

But we need for such interpretation, in studying the Word as well as the works of God, both a telescopic and microscopic vision; the telescope to see farther off into immeasurable space and quantity, and the microscope to trace minute relations and connections of the nearest and smallest of God's works and words with the most distant and the largest. For they are all one, and all have more or less the brightness and express image, the ἀπαύγασμα and χαράντηρ, of His glory, by whom and through whom and for whom are all things; so that the whole

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created universe, material and immaterial, and all intelligences therein, are a Christian universe, with a Christian character and design; and the Law, over all laws, and for all beings and things, is the law of righteousness in Christ; of whom the whole family in heaven and earth are named; neither is there any real progress possible, in theology or in natural science, but only in and under the acknowledgment of the mystery of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, in whose name all nations are to be instructed and baptized.

The instruction, the baptism, the infinite mystery, and the results, are indisputable vouchers for God's Word, as beyond all question *His* Word, not man's. Here are faith, doubt, evidence, inspiration, infallibility, assurance, and eternal life.

Faith is the origin and justifying ground of hope, which is the result, through prayer, of even the least degree of faith in God's promises. Then hope, exercised in prayer through faith, begins to realize God's Word in assurance, by the "Earnest of the Spirit in the heart." But hope implies doubt; and fear by reason of the eternal consequences depending, is a

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just and healthful correlative and stimulant of both. Thus, faith and doubt, animated and inspired by hope, work out the demonstration. Doubt itself becomes the means and index of investigation; sharpens a man's criticism and inquisitiveness, by the very sincerity and anguish of his perplexities, seeking the right, the safe, the holy path. An Indian on a trail is but made the keener and more careful in his search, by his uncertainties.

Faith would cease both its preciousness and its praise, as well as its usefulness, if there were no grounds of doubt. Actual sight puts faith behind, not before; and hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait and labor for it, because of our faith in God, and in His Word. Inspired and urged by doubt, faith and hope work out the evidence by which the soul rests in God. Faith becomes the *substantia* of things hoped for (the *ἐπιβραβεῖς*), and brings to light the evidence of things not seen.

A screw is swifter than an arrow; for its ally, its lever, is resistance. A screw adapted to the air, as

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an iron propeller to the water, would be swift as the lightning. Knowledge advances and accumulates by obstacles. Evidence does not come in a straight line of propositions and conclusions, but pours in from a multitude of side and interweaving brooks and streams, that themselves have wound their way among mountains and tumbled over precipices. So that an array of evidences may be more truly logical, more absolutely demonstrative, in fragmentary and desultory processes, of experiments, interferences and cross-lights, duels of incidence and coincidence, reflection and refraction, than by steel links in any one chain.

The heat of earnest doubt is as the smoking flax, working for flame. God values it, Christ hallows and blesses it. And in its very nature such doubt works by faith and for faith, and lays hold of all things, intertwinning and conquering (as Jacob, the wrestler at midnight,) with obstacles seemingly omnipotent, but whose resistance gives strength; just as an immeasurable screw in its vast and mighty revolutions might make the ocean and the whole material universe its propelling shaft. Thus God's own love wrestles with

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Spiritual sin and death, and brings good out of evil, causing the wrath of men and devils to praise Him and restraining the remainder of wrath. God's old miracles are kept working new results, just as Aaron's rod that blossomed was laid up in the ark for occasion of new rebellions.

In Blunt's admirable volume of "Undesigned Coincidences," he remarks, in considering the veracity of the Books of Moses, that "the more attentively and scrupulously we examine the Scriptures, the more we shall be convinced that the natural and supernatural events recorded in them must stand or fall together. *The Spirit of miracles possesses the entire body of the Bible, and can not be cast out without rending in pieces the whole frame of the history itself, merely considered as a history.*"\*

Of these historic correlations, the existence of which is itself a proof of the miraculous presence of God, as clear as the shining of the sun, the passage in Deut.

\* "Veracity of the Books of Moses," Part I. Also, Stillingfleet's "Origines Sacre," vol. i. b. ii., on Moses and Miracles. Oxford edition, 1836. Also, Havernick, "Introd. Pentateuch" p. 416, Edinburgh, 1850.

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xxxi. 24–27, and the repetition of the same in verses 28, 29, 30, are an instance so remarkable, that it might have been set at the head of the argument for a miraculous interposition down to the coming of Christ.

“Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there *for a witness against thee.*” Thus Moses by the will of the Lord commanded the Levites, having previously (Moses and Joshua together), received their charge from God, in the tabernacle of the congregation, in the presence of all the people. “Write ye this song for you, and teach it to the children of Israel. Put it in their mouths, that this song may be A WITNESS FOR ME AGAINST THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL. And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are befallen them, that THIS SONG SHALL TESTIFY AGAINST THEM AS A WITNESS; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed. Moses therefore wrote this song the same day, and taught it the children of Israel,” and gave Joshua God’s charge. The song is then recorded, and at the end of its recital it is added, *that Moses spake all the words of this song, in the ears of the people, he, and Joshua*

the son of Nun. And Moses made an end of speaking all these words to all Israel. And he said unto them, "Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, *all the words of this law*. For it is not a vain thing for you, BECAUSE IT IS YOUR LIFE."

YOUR LIFE; and a witness against yourselves, *because it condemns you*, and may lead you back to God, who alone can forgive and redeem you! This is God's merciful educational discipline, begun and demonstrated with the Israelites, and continued for centuries in the whole course of His providences and prophets from Samuel to Malachi; and thence forward on the same principles with all mankind, in all kingdoms and nations, to the end of time, even for life eternal, which is the gift offered to all, by the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and the Morning Star, so long as the Spirit and the Bride say come. The Jews have a life-interest in this, as long as the world stands, which will certainly be till the twelfth chapter of Romans is fulfilled; "and so all Israel shall be saved: for this is my covenant unto



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them when I shall take away their sins." The whole New Testament belongs as entirely to the Jews as to the Gentiles; from Genesis to the Apocalypse, their Saviour and ours is the Author and Finisher of Faith in the Blessed Word of God that endureth forever.

We wonder as we read this record, so sacredly and unalterably preserved in the Hebrew Scriptures for four thousand years unto this day, by what power of assurance, what indwelling safeguards against fraud, it could have been locked upon a nation's conscience, seeing that it would be for all ages, an undeniable and self-acknowledged verdict of that conscience against themselves. And we immediately find in the correlations between this song of indictment in the thirty-second chapter, and the blessing that follows in the thirty-third, a connection so indestructible between the curses and the blessings of the Almighty, that a penitential acknowledgment of the first was an essential condition of the fulfilment of the last.

It is not possible to pick this lock, or deny any part of it as a forgery against the people, without converting the whole into an assurance of irreversible destruction. Doubt and fear through consciousness

of guilt, balanced by faith and hope in God's mercy, make up a compound safety lock, which can not be opened without God's key and combination cipher, except by blowing the safe and the whole building to pieces, with all that do business therein. And thus, faith, fear, and the reason of self-regard, *in and through a conscience towards God*, preserved from generation to generation as the central element of a religious education, were the protecting combination of miraculous efficacy, in the preservation of these records; over which, through all the wanderings of the children of Israel, the miracle of a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night rested; assuring them that the omniscience and omnipotence of Jehovah kept guard; and that a penitential and prayerful acknowledgment of God's justice in the song would forever be an indisputable condition of the possibility of God's forgiving and redeeming mercy in the salvation through the promised Messiah and Saviour, who was to be, for all that would believe in Him, THE LORD, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Take we then as a fit preface to our argument, the pregnant words of Lord Brooke on the "Uses of

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Human Learning," written about the year 1628, when John Bunyan began his Pilgrim Life, without knowledge of any other book than his Bible, and out of the Bible wrote his "JERUSALEM SINNER SAVED."

"And to conclude, whether we would erect

Ourselves or others by the choice of arts,  
Our chief endeavor must be to effect

A sound foundation, not on sandy parts,  
Of light opinion, self-ness, words of men,

BUT THAT SURE ROCK OF TRUTH, GOD'S WORD, GOD'S PEN.

"And if this wisdom only can be found

By seeking God, *even in the faith He gives;*

If earth, heaven, sea, stars, creatures, be the bound

Wherein revealed, His power and wisdom lives;

If true obedience be the way to this,

And only who grows better, wiser is,—

"Then let not curious silly flesh conceive

Itself more rich, or happy, when it knows

Those words of art, which men (as shells) must cleave,

Before the life's true wisdom they dislose.

Truth is no counsellor to assist the evil;

And in his own, who wiser than the Devil?

“For only that man understands indeed,

And well remembers, which he well can do:—

The laws live, only where the law doth breed the and

Obedience to the works it binds us to:—

And as the life of wisdom hath expresst,

IF THIS YOU KNOW, THEN DO IT, AND BE BLEST.”

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## INTRODUCTION.

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ONE of Frederick's chaplains is said to have replied to him, when he asked for a brief demonstration of Christianity, "The Jews, your majesty!" It was a sudden concentration of truth, like that of Christ for the woman of Samaria, "We know what we worship, for SALVATION IS OF THE JEWS;" and that salvation is the whole of Christianity. The Jews included Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms; all the Old Testament literature and demonstration before Christ; and at this day the Jews are the continued miracle of Christianity over the face of the whole earth. Let any man ask sincerely *who and whence the Jews are*, and he will find "*God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.*"

Christianity rests on these two divine pillars: the history of the Jews, and the biography of Jesus. The existence of either is impossible without a supernatural origin, and the one demonstrates the other. A destructive criticism assails both the history and biography as a compound of myths and impostures. The history of the Jews is a record of God's providence with them, from Adam to the coming of the Saviour of mankind. It is a history of prayer and faith, through God's merciful promises, and of human redemption through Christ's appointed and predicted sufferings and death. It is

thus a history of the beginnings and growth of all Christian ideas and institutions.

The heir by entail of all the assumed historic religions in the world might choose out, here and there, a Confucius, a Zoroaster, a Socrates, a Boodh, a Mahomet. Is there one of these religions that has any spiritual truth whatever, which was not first in the foretold and accomplished Christianity of the Word of God? But if we should select from them all every good thing, still, without Christ and Him crucified, *we have nothing*. If we accept HIM, we have ALL THE TRUTH THAT IS OF ANY WORTH AS A RELIGION FOR MANKIND IN ALL AGES.

And all the vocabulary of prehistoric and unknown eras or forms of worship beyond the book of Genesis is but an ignoring of the limitations of true historic reality, and an attempt to supply a vacuum of uncertainty by conjectures. There is no such interval, nor ever has been, of unrecorded truth for our reliance. It is all bridged over by the only absolutely true history in existence, going back to the origin of things, the first existence of earth and man. Beyond that lies the only prehistoric reality, that is, God self-existent, the Creator. There divine history begins, and never ends. Thence the stream flows down; and myths and fables are the work of those who have not dwelt on that stream, nor known historic realities.

The Egyptians come to our knowledge first of all as a nation, in that divine history; afterwards, in the pages of Herodotus; then in the monuments discovered and deciphered. So Assyria, Nineveh, Babylon,

and the disinterred cities, with their stone and baked-brick libraries are an illustrative commentary as undeniable as the coal mines and chalk mountains of the globe. And panting Time toils after the Divine Providence with its chronology and its hieroglyphics, not in vain, but as the sure and patient fulfiller and interpreter, as well as note-taker of divinely prophesied events. And so, all our geological and antiquarian discoveries, the disinterments of the Theban Tombs, and whatever be the mathematics of the Pyramids, are merely God's own notes on Genesis. This is the book, in which Christ Himself planted the pillars of His system of redemption. It is the book in whose written verbal statements of facts He rested the foundations of the divine government over men; the divine authority and meaning of the two governing and moulding institutions of human society through the world,—marriage and the Sabbath; the preservation of all purity, intelligence, culture, progress, love to God and man, knowledge and worship of God; at the same time, the deadly nature of sin against God, and the need and promise of a Redeemer. The book, from the divine authorship and infallibility of which Christ demonstrated the future life as made known of God to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to Moses through the same divine history; the appeal being from link to link in such wise, that every thought, word, statement, is part of an undeniable unity.

A book holding up all things in the history of our race in the atmosphere of *eternal light and consequences*; the fall of man, the assurance of God's interposition for his recovery, the communion of God with succes-

sive leaders, fathers, commanders, and teachers of the people; a communion so definite and known, so absolute, eternal, and for all generations, that Christ refers to its human partakers and covenanters, passed into the heavens and now living with God, as examples of the immortality and eternal responsibility of all mankind; and accepts and sanctions the references of Moses to that book as God's own references. It is the first book of eternal realities, the seed book of faith in God, the root book of the whole Divine Revelation. A book, the austere simplicity of which stands in such contrast with all other remnants of tradition and history among men, that the deniers of its divine inspiration are driven to the necessity of tearing it in fragments, and then interpolating and piecing it up with conjectured fables like the mythological origins of the races of oriental antiquity, so as to bring it to the same level of human criticism and credibility, rejecting the supernatural and divine.

The prevailing unbelief is both careless in its methods and reckless of its consequences; two things that work illimitable devastation and ruin. For indeed we are born not only into God's world, with our frame fearfully and wonderfully made, in minutest adaptation to the material forces and laws of the world (*nature's pluck*, as Prof. Huxley warns us of its despotism, and commands us to obey, or take the inevitable consequences, no redemption possible), but into God's *spiritual truth*, with *souls conformed and adapted* to it, breathing it, and inspired by it, as the lungs in God's balmy atmosphere. And therefore *belief*, not doubt, is the



very *first healthful organizing exercise* of the human soul. For it is in God's light that we see light, and were born to live by breathing it, *not by doubting*. All science is God's own truth, and being taught by Him, it is all *spiritual science* in Him; forever increasing in the knowledge of God, its author; making us *children of light*, and partakers of the inheritance of *saints in light*, by believing in Christ, who is "the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

"*That thy trust may be in the Lord, I have made known to thee; have I not WRITTEN TO THEE, excellent things in counsel and knowledge; that I might MAKE THEE KNOW THE CERTAINTY OF THE WORDS OF TRUTH, that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?*" Prov. xxii. 17-21. "It is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee; they shall withal be *jilted in thy lips*." Let any man read, along with this passage, the third and the eighth chapter of Proverbs; and he can not doubt the assertion and the knowledge of a verbal inspiration from God, among the people for whose use these divine instructions were given. Job, the Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, occupy the centre of the Scriptures;—history and prophecy, temptation and faith, prayer and praise, foresight and experience. History first of all grows out of prophecy; then prophecy is fulfilled in history; and both present to faith a mass of internal evidence, the record of which would have been impossible except by divine omniscience.

What has ever kept the world anchored to God, but just this, *It is WRITTEN*? Had there been only the evi-

dence of traditional knowledge, which is always traditional uncertainty, there would have been as many religions, and of equal authority, as there are idols in polytheism. What is written in the Law? The conditions of eternal life are written, to be read and known of all. They were never received by tradition from the Fathers.

And who are they that have kept the written truth, as being in itself the presence and authority of the living God? The Jews, generation after generation, often at the cost of martyrdom. A succession of Hebrew heroes, who were born with an innate prepossessing sense of the divine inspiration and authority of the sacred books, and would preserve them from destruction and stand by them at the peril of death, not accepting deliverance when the question was between deserting their trust with the word of God, or dying.

And by whose faithfulness were the words of God proclaimed and made known to them? By a succession, well known, of men of whom the world was not worthy; such as Moses, Samuel, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the prophets. But if these men had not also *written* as well as *spoken* the word of God, of what avail to those who followed after? And without the *same Holy Spirit* in their hearts and lips *for writing down* the record of the revelation, there could have been no divine certainty in that.

Who then can *authenticate the writing*, or make us sure, without possibility of error, of that which is comprehended in the phrase for our guidance, as to the right worship of God, *It is written?* Who but the Lord Jesus Christ, the Author and Finisher of Faith?

For He came with that manifestation of authority and demonstration of all the truth that was and is and is to come; Himself THE WAY, THE TRUTH, THE LIFE, the WORD MADE FLESH, and dwelling among us. He came not to render theology an uncertain science, nor to abolish any of its truths, but to perfect and fulfil. The Author and Finisher of Faith did never bequeath a legacy of doubts for the perplexity and quarrelling of all generations, or a case in chancery for the support of lawyers to the end of the world.

Is any thing ever assured to us without a promise in Christ? And is any thing promised to any one in the Scriptures that is not also promised to us, on the faith of His sufferings and death for all mankind? Therefore we are right in taking the very highest view and sense of all that we can find in a divine revelation for man's good. And whatever we find and experience in our own communion with God through Christ, may have been found and known not only by saints before our time, but also before Christ's coming. In some instances it may have been not only communicated by the Divine Spirit to souls seeking after God, but inspired also in minds chosen and prepared of God, in order to be *recorded* by such souls, for all following generations. Such were the ministrations of the Holy Spirit to Job in the depths of his distresses, in the disclosure of the Redeemer, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

That was, as it were, the highest *rung* in the ladder of Jacob's dream rising from earth to heaven. To most men the step where it enters heaven and is fastened to that within the vail, is unseen; but if it has

ever been seen *by any one in Holy Writ*, and the vision recorded, it *may* be seen by us, by inspiration of the same faith. And we are permitted to accept, as from the Divine Spirit, the highest spiritual interpretation that our personal hopes and aspirations can put upon it, as a revelation intended, not for Job and his company only, but for all mankind.

The nineteenth chapter of Job, as well as the 23d and 51st Psalms, and the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and the fifteenth of I Corinthians, are every one the heir-looms of a believing immortality in man. Every man living may apply them freely if he will. What Cowper said of himself may be said by all.

“But God has breathed upon a worm,  
And sent me from above,  
Wings such as clothe an angel's form,  
The wings of joy and love.  
With these to Pisgah's top I fly,  
And there delighted stand,  
To view, beneath a shining sky,  
The spacious promised land.  
The Lord of all the vast domain  
Has promised it to me;—  
The length and breadth of all the plain,  
As far as faith can see.”

The whole Bible, all its promises, as all its warnings, are the inheritance of saints in light, encompassing the soul with all the safe-guards both of hope and fear.

Christ not only by His death fulfilled the history and prophecies of the Jewish nation, but by His life demonstrated all those vast ideas of immortality, faith, prayer, providence, never known in any example on earth, till

the divine Hebrew revelation of them from God, for the whole world's guidance; never acted out except by inspired heroes portrayed in the Hebrew Scriptures; never traced or analyzed or taught in any other literature or experience of men outside those Scriptures.

“Not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God shall man live.” “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, soul, and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself.” The human mind can conceive no more perfect concentration of holiness and happiness than is contained in this law; no more absolute expression of infinite benevolence in the Lawgiver.

In the divine history, the love and mercy of God in His covenant with Abraham were the ground both of the law on Sinai and the successive atoning sacrifices. The priesthood and the sacrificial and ceremonial law and system were first and most important, while the law was but the servant of God's holiness to convince the soul of sin. The priest, the altar, and the sacrifice presented the way of forgiveness and the offer of life in God's believed and trusted mercy, and so the law was the appointed school-master, to bring sinners to the mercy-seat in prayer.

By the action of their souls in coming to that mercy-seat were the true seekers after God in the history of Israel tested. And now, the true seeker is he who follows out the truth of God's mercy in Christ. Seekers after God seek truth in God's light, not man's. But seekers after truth, regardless of consequences, God or no God, set up a standard of independence, which

can not consist with our nature as dependent and trusting children of a heavenly Father.

The history of the Jews is a compassionate, continuous, providential miracle, just as profoundly conservative, and illustrative, as any rock-discoveries by which we demonstrate the history of epochs on the globe. The preservation of that history, in such undisputed accuracy, is unexampled, being maintained by a most wonderful combination of evidence, so interwoven with all that we are most absolutely certain of, and most earnestly desirous of preserving, maintained providentially by the concentration of such lights from the whole world's enmity; such interferences and violences from all nations, attempting to destroy the Jews themselves out of existence.

There is not another nation or family on earth whose connections we can trace back, so accurately and so far; can trace them by the lights of predictions concerning them, and cross trains of history colliding with them; trace them by ruins of empires and cities immortalized in our knowledge mainly by their treatment of them; trace them through murderous persecutions and barbarous laws and religious fanaticisms from generation to generation, consecrating their destruction and the hatred of them as an act of piety to God; trace them by their own suicidal curse at the crucifixion cleaving to them: "His blood be on us and on our children"; trace them by that curse fulfilled through all nations, and yet their equally miraculous preservation beneath the bearing of its burden, that they may go about with it until it be removed; trace them back to Christ, Him-

self a Jew; back to Abraham, he and they the descendants of Abraham, the beginning of the circumcised race, separated from all the nations as God's chosen family; traced further back than any race of mankind can be followed, with monuments all the way up to the cities of Sodom and Damascus; traced by undisputed predictions of designed and long continued providences and disciplinary measures, from God as their Father; such predictions as those in Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, up to this day and hour being fulfilled in the sight of all nations.

God educates the human race by books, legislates by books, makes men learn for life or death by books; and the appeal of the Son of God Himself for justification and certainty, putting an end to all strife, and sending doubt out of court, is just this, *IT IS WRITTEN*. But what is written is accompanied now by what is engraven in the rocks, and most surely known and acknowledged among men as absolute, indisputable certainties. So that to-day, science and history are only bell-ringers of the chimes that God set up six thousand years ago.

The history of the Jews is a running battery of God's words and miracles; and their existence to-day is a visible miracle, as clearly the counterpart and seal of the recorded miracles, and the work of the same God, as the correlation between light and the eye, lightning and thunder, the pointers and the north star. What God has done, is doing, and has promised to do, with the Jews, can no more be doubted or disregarded in our navigation as men and nations across the sea of

destiny, than what the heavens are telling can be trifled with in the sailing of a fleet of ships, soul-freighted, round the globe. And so God's education of all nations proceeds from the unerring chart-records of *His* vast celestial transactions with one representative nation. The choice now, of God or Baal, and its everlasting consequences, are set before all nations, as distinctly as ever by Joshua fifteen hundred years before Christ, or by Elijah nine hundred, but with tenfold assurance of the inevitable penalties waiting the eternal demonstration.

And now we seem to be entering on an experiment whether society, all these advantages from experience of the gospel being given, and all these facilities for its spread, may not get on without them, or by science alone in the neglect of them; rejecting their providential aid, as requiring a belief in God and Christianity, or the adoption and teaching of an opinion of responsibility to God, which the State, under God or nature, has no right to assume. And what a dilemma is this! Compelled by the average of reason for six thousand years, to assume a God, but denying the authority to teach those beliefs in Him, which are the sanction of laws, the strength of conscience, and the only support and justification of the State in enforcing its own statutes. Certainly, the purpose of education is to make out of the child for the man, and out of the man for the world, on which his active powers and passions are to operate, all that he can become, of goodness and usefulness and consequent happiness, possessed and imparted.

But if the tendency of science to exclude a belief



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in God advances with the popularization of knowledge, and is fostered in its very primers, then the child will one day master Laplace, and shall be a hundred years old in the power of the habit of scepticism, before he is permitted to examine the idea of God in a divine revelation. As the extent of the universe is demonstrated to the youthful mind, and at the same time the omnipresent love and providence of God are forbidden to be taught in any primary school of morals, what balance can there be against the gloom of infinite space, and the power of superstition? For the imagination will create its own demons, if not taught to trust in a benevolent God, and to flee for refuge to the bosom of His love, the security of His being.

What mankind thus far have seen and understood is this: namely, from Adam to Moses, about two thousand years, the principles of divine law, known by conscience, but disregarded (see Rom. i. 18-23), and the world's habit towards its Maker formed out of such disregard. Then from Moses to Christ, two thousand more, with THE LAW WRITTEN out, as a schoolmaster, and with experience of the character and consequences of a violation and perversion of the same. Then from Christ onwards two thousand more, *with knowledge of the gospel, and the character consequent on the perversion of that*; including three hundred years of partial recovery from such perversion, with accumulated knowledge of its experimental power, and great advancement in science under its light.

Now, if it would take thousands of years to prepare the materials of such an education of salvation for the

race, and a generation of men fit in all things to be its teachers, experts in its knowledge and power, these six thousand years may fairly be considered as but the threshold of an entrance of humanity, with all these divine advantages, upon three hundred and sixty-five thousand; multiplying each one of man's days of watching, receiving, and sowing, by a thousand of God's years of harvesting in Christ's kingdom. If there were such a computation of time by days in the creation even of the school-house for man's infancy, how much more in the vast increasing work of redemption for man's majority and heaven?

And hence the requisite elements of vastness and certainty in the structure of a divine revelation for such a succession of cycles and generations, extending into eternity. For we are manifestly only at the gateway, as of infancy, before a development of divine mercy and human activity that no imagination can fathom.

And the first thing to be noted is the *certainty of all God's appeals* addressed to reason, faith, and knowledge, excluding all grounds of doubt as to God, and the truth and sincerity of His calls and warnings, whatever there may be of difficulty or of incomprehensibility. It is not a blind faith, but the most self-possessed and clearest vision of the mind that the argument of God addresses, with the command to search and secure its whole meaning as for our life.

What infinite destructive malevolence in that form of philosophy, which gives the lie to all these demonstrations of a system of creative and providential goodness and mercy, by the Author of our being, and of

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all the arrangements of nature by which we are preserved and disciplined for another and a perfect existence of adoring love! But above all, to think of reproducing a philosophy of Nature, that, nineteen hundred years after the Lord of nature and of grace has become incarnate for our redemption, seeks to carry us back to the blindness and darkness of paganism, and by practical atheism under the name of evolution, would drive God and prayer out of men's hearts, and if possible out of the world. A philosophy that sets up Natural Selection as the deity of force behind all elements, with the postulate of the impossibility of the God of the Scriptures ever creating any thing by His Word, or ever spontaneously interposing in the government of the world in answer to prayer! A philosophy that would carry all beings through the world without acknowledgment of God, and out of the world with a character of distrust and denial, that self-banishes the soul from the presence and worship of God for ever. A philosophy that receives nothing from God, thanks God for nothing, expects nothing from Him, and is the very perfection of the creed of the fool even under the light of the Cross,—No God, no Saviour, no need of Him, prayer a superstition, death an eternal sleep!

The book of Isaiah alone, read understandingly in the schools would be discipline enough, literature enough, science enough, for the building of an indestructible empire inspiring an unconquerable patriotism, a confidence in realities, a contempt of shams, a detestation of pride and hypocrisy, a transparency

and purity before God, courage in danger, patience in adversity, all the qualities needed in such a world as this. But God has prepared and bestows, by the working of divine thought and providence through three thousand years, the gift of a whole library of such books, with the Holy Spirit as Librarian, covenanted to attend every book into the soul, as its Divine Interpreter; God Himself communing with each reader just as separately and attentively as if there had been but one soul in the universe that could read. A library intended for all nations, and speaking to the whole earth to hear the Word of the Lord.

And God shows in the history of the Jewish people, individually and with personal providence and discipline, not only how a soul is born of God, and kept and trained for its immortal heritage, but how a nation is born and educated, through God's choice and care of its patriarchs, prophets, and warriors; through the power of a divine covenant committed to a whole people, for vigilance over their own rulers, according to the divine letter which all possess, and which all must teach, generation after generation, to their children; demonstrating that a nation has a soul, and a continuity and unity of life and responsibility to God, imperishable; an obligation of the keeping and teaching of divine truth, once made known; the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, and making the nation the same, through all changes; demonstrating, through the immutability and constancy of the divine covenant, how to rest on God out of ruin and despair, how to return to God and a new life in Him, when torn from Him by their own angry passions.

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Covenanters all, with a merciful, forgiving Father, who had given them not only the book of the law with all its shuttings up and openings in statutes, judgments, types, ceremonies, of eternal and prophetic lights, but instructions for behavior and escape out of their own foreseen and forewarned rebellions, and breakings of the covenant; the hurricane itself foretold and provided for, lifeboats to flee to, and the methods of their use, taught them ages before the storm; and besides all this, the principles of the covenant, and of God's discipline, concentrated in a song to be committed to memory, as an indwelling angel bearing them, or flame of inspiration whirling them; all the tribes and synagogues receiving, as by law they break into separate orbs in their appointed inheritance, the same impulse and life of motion on their axis and in their orbits; and five hundred years later, after profound and costly experience of God's faithfulness and their own weakness and guilt, the same covenant and constitution renewed in the sublimest form of prayer in that Temple of the Mercy-seat, made for all nations;—a prayer and covenant to which the whole earth was party, teaching all mankind their sin and misery, and the way out of it in God's mercy.

It is the example of a people, dismayed, shipwrecked, yet holding in all gales and tempests to the life lines of prayer and the promises of God. Oh Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in Me is thy help! Taught purity of faith and worship in the very crucibles of idolatry, in the anguish of inward remorse and outward fire; rebuilding the walls of their capital city, after centuries of dispersion and retributive ruin,

amidst enemies so thick and murderous, that the spear must act in one hand and the trowel in the other; laborers and warriors united, all to return as they came, obedient to God, with the arts of edification and defence, the discipline of self-reliance and dependence on God, going on together. The example of a people, whose nobles are at once from God and from themselves, whose genealogy is divine, whose education is the brooding of their conscious immortality directing them to eternal life in Christ, the coming King of Glory; whose faith in God made every family an independent princely circle, out of which might come the looked for Messiah and Prince of Life; and whose same faith, corrected and renewed when the veil is taken away by the heart turning to the Lord, shall still hold every family in an eternal union with Him; an assurance by which the whole world is still held, through them, till the time come, when every knee shall bow to Jesus, and every tongue confess to God.

God's university *for* truth is an arrangement of power and means for the *spread of truth*; and now, after six thousand years' instruction and experience of the world in the common school and academy of God's discipline, what is needed is the use of all these knowledges, *with the spirit of habitual faith*, by the host of graduates so prepared to be God's instruments in the world's new creation. For the field is the world, and the process thus far has been the survey of the world, and God's preparation of seeds, sowers, and reapers. Our own century, just now coming to its close, has

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been wonderfully marked by the seizures and harnessings of invisible elements, that were waiting in God's market place to be hired; steam power, railroads, telegraphs, penny postages, submarine cables, printing-presses from the very thought, almost as swift of action as electric force, and multiplying volumes as the motions of light; day and Sabbath schools, newspapers, sciences, primers, and catechisms, Bibles translated into all languages, carried free to all races; rapid transits all over the world, and nations brought together; gatherings of all tribes at new Jerusalems, waiting for new Pentecosts; London, containing more Jews than all Palestine, more Roman Catholics than Rome; New York, containing more Germans than Berlin; and a concurrence of Parthians and Medes, Chinese, Cretes, Arabians, Africans, ready to hear and to speak in their own tongues the wonderful works of God.

And the object now of increasing our faith by science is just to teach a surer foresight by faith, which is the eye of science, as conscience towards God is of the soul; faith of a world to come, and of what we are to meet there, and how we are to be prepared for it. The experience of what we pass through here was certainly meant to be set as lights at the masthead and the bowsprit, flashing on the path before us. The operation of laws, principles, elements, in our physical and mental being, with consciousness as the unmistakable witness, is to teach us to prepare for that world, into which we shall graduate from this. There certainly is no other possible explanation of the kind of discipline, through which we are now passing.

Well, some may say, Men do not reason in that way. But God reasons for them, and by His word rules in them, and holds them, whether they will or no; so that even blind men walk in, under, and by this divine light, as a man goes east by the motion of God's orbs, even while he is walking west, or *vice versa*, by his own muscles.

For this volume, this library, is beyond all question, the great repository of God's educating powers, His Spirit being bound with it, and acting by it. It took such a nation, and the noblest inspired souls in it, through a growth of thousands of years, to perfect this library, not finished, till He said, from the cross, IT IS FINISHED! and then not till His words from the throne of eternity were uttered, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, and what thou seest WRITE IN A BOOK, AND SEND IT TO THE CHURCHES." When finished, He threw the whole into the alembic of time, and the crucible of man's furious passions, to demonstrate and test it, by all the methods and concentrations of angry criticism, and all the triumphs of a believing experience.

The design of this volume,—this library so constructed, and thrown through the world,—is just simply this: a presentation to the human soul of that image and essence of infinite goodness, love, mercy, truth, power, wisdom, all the fullness of the Godhead manifest in Christ, for the soul's own participation in the divine nature, that we might be complete in Him.

And it is as absurd to suppose that men can keep and obey this word *as individuals*, while *the nation* that they constitute *rejects it*, and forbids its teaching, as



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that men can walk the surface of this globe, without at the same time the earth, and they themselves with it, going round the sun.

Now when this infinite work is finished; principles, laws, institutions, examples, teachings, warnings, providences, miracles, experiences of reward and retribution for good and evil, and of the inherent power of both good and evil to create and perpetuate such experience, individual and national; both God and man revealed in history, and history illumined by God; man not left to take God at His word merely, of what *would* happen, but with the knowledge of what *has* happened; so that the predictions and the experience are at once before us in the same pages, and the remedy for all evil in a present salvation equally demonstrated, and the exact conditions and method for men's availing themselves of it;—when all this work is finished, and an experience of ages is added, demonstrating its truth and power, even up to the conversion and new life of nations, the resurrection of the moral dead; when earth has been subdued by science and industry, just as commanded of God in the beginning when He said, “*Replenish the earth, and have dominion over it;*” when men have run to and fro from pole to pole, and knowledges and teachers have been increased by ship-loads, and ships by fleets, and the wealth of the world by whole mines mined, and of God's Church itself, by the very action of their principles of fidelity to God and man making them commercial as well as spiritual sovereigns, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, for the publication of God's praises, and the doing

of His work, by the enshrined omnipotence of His word; then, at this very point the position is attempted, that the use of the word of God, in the education of the conscience, and the introduction of the soul to Christ, is *contrary to the freedom of the conscience, and the necessary indifference and sovereignty of the State.*

What is this, but the old predicted phenomenon of an arrogated human infallibility setting itself in the place of God, and by assumed authority over His word dethroning God Himself from the conscience, in forbidding that word to be studied and obeyed. Take away the portrait of Christ, is the voice of modern secularism and the method of political blindness. Take away this divine presentment from the schools, from the vision of the mind; let no child's attention be called to it, no note be taken of it; let a cloud dwell upon it; let it never be set among the models of character or the powers of instruction. It realizes the description given by Paul of the method of discipline by the god of this world blinding the minds of those that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God should shine into their hearts.

When the new creating Photographer has given the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, given the means and elements for the vision of Christ in His infinite beauty, attractiveness and merciful love to our souls, so that we may look to Him and be saved; and when all things are ready for the children of the whole world, to receive His likeness into the depths of their being, by beholding Him, there comes between the child's face and the Saviour's,

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by the adroit manipulations of a power behind the scenes, the awful shadow of gloom and doubt, the caricature of imposture stealing across the camera, for the children to receive an indelible impression from that, instead of the imprint of His love who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not."

Are we bound meekly to submit to such an operation, on the plea that the State can not recognize religious teaching? Or is it to be regarded in us as intolerance and oppression of liberal consciences, if we will not receive the scientific method, but insist upon our right to the freedom of spiritual truth? It is a fraud upon humanity, the embezzlement and sequestration of an inheritance of knowledge and life belonging to our children, if Christ is called sectarian; if either science or sectarianism or both united, are permitted to exclude the knowledge of Christ from the children's studies, from history, from their schools. The voice of God's retributive justice in kind will be this, Because thou hast forgotten my law, I also will forget thy children. The wisdom of your wise men shall perish, and the understanding of your prudent men shall be hid. "In the tragedies of Sophocles," said Carlyle, speaking to the students in Edinburgh, "In the tragedies of Sophocles, there is a most distinct recognition of the eternal justice of Heaven, and the unfailing punishment of crime against the laws of God. I believe you will find in all histories that that has been at the head and foundation of them all; and that no nation that did not contemplate this wonderful universe with an awe-stricken and reverential feeling that there was a great unknown, omnipotent, and

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all-wise, and all-virtuous Being, superintending all men in it, and all interests in it—no nation ever came to very much, nor did any man either, who forgot that. If a man did forget that, he forgot the most important part of his mission in this world.”

Now of what benefit for us are all histories of the past, but as prisms and spectroscopes through which we may see the light of the divine attributes, revealing and prophesying the nature and laws of the world to which we are advancing?

Of all this we are warned, and for all this the word of God is an accumulation of warnings and fulfilments, as well as promises, from generation to generation.

What is a proverb? It is first, a *pro-duct* of immortality, *produco*, a guardian of man's spirit for eternity. It is a word before, *proverbum*, a word of warning, and a divine magnet, a word of prepossession, for instruction of the soul.

The Hebrew proverbs are the compasses and quadrants of mankind. They are the gift of God through the working of His Spirit, His truth and men's experience together establishing an irresistible demonstration. They are not the work of single original minds, but distilled through the mind and experience of the common people through many generations. At length some penetrating inductive genius, some Solomon, or Bacon, or Shakspeare, gathers them, gives them a record out of tradition, a rescue from the quartz, and sets them as jewels, diamonds, apples of gold in baskets of silver. Proverbs show the action of centuries of social and individual life, and the experience of men's discovered natures, and the inveterate action and reaction of

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principles, motives, habits, prejudices: the knowledge of which becomes at length the wisdom of a state under God's government. But the proverbs of all nations may be compared together, and none of them show the air of heaven and immortality except those of the Jews in their Hebrew Scriptures.

Accumulation, expansion, and deeper depths of knowledge therefore, generation after generation, from prophet to prophet, by the Divine Spirit that gave it;—these are the methods of divine science. God chooses the messengers, prepares and disciplines the experts, the conductors, the torch-bearers, and lets them all color the products of their own departments with the originalities, the varieties, of their own believing souls. The result is a myriad-lighted and reverberated certainty.

And we are not only at liberty, but our only right rule in reading is to get all that we can get out of the Bible, and not as little as we can.

We therefore charge against some of our modern scientific teachers that they enthrone a principle in opposition to all reason and truth, when they say that "scepticism is the highest of duties, and that the scientific conscience of these latter days consecrates doubt in a high place among our moral obligations." For science and the senses it may, and if there be no conscience towards God, it must; but not if the soul believes in God.

We have also this charge, namely, that they are instructing men both to believe and to doubt on insufficient evidence, putting the material above the moral, and quantity above quality; two of the gravest faults

in a world like this, where God has provided sufficient assurance for a spiritual faith, relying on Him, but where, for the very discipline of virtue, we must act on probabilities.

For, *prudens questio*, said Lord Bacon, not *dubitatio*,—wise enquiry, not doubt, is half the battle.

“And sitting by the wayside, blind,  
He is the nearest to the light  
Who crieth out most earnestly,  
Lord, that I may receive my sight!”

“*Mine own with usury*” is the infinitely just principle in God’s administration over men as His stewards, whether of the properties of matter or mind. And so, to him that hath shall be given. This is the rule of a divine revelation. It was, from the beginning, an increasing inheritance in God’s savings-bank of faith, according to the believing receptivity of the soul towards God, and the use made by the heart and in the life, of that which a man hath. If put to usury for God, it grew by compound interest, till the possessor became a millionaire. This plain principle of interpretation is as a north star.

All this throws the whole race of mankind entirely upon God’s merciful grace and power for every good thing, and creates a witness and demand within the soul for *prayer to God*. And this prostration of the race before God, in guilt, helplessness, and hope, making all mankind “*prisoners of Hope*,” not victims of Despair, is a grand and glorious part of the internal evidence in that vast divine literature, spread over four thousand years, through sixty-six books, written by men of

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all eras and classes, without collusion or concert, with the same presentation everywhere of God and man, time and eternity, life and immortality, man's guilt and ruin, and God's inexhaustible love and mercy in Christ. The very existence of such a book is demonstration of its supernatural origin. What other seal is needed? Eternity our only sphere, God our only life, God in Christ our only means of attaining it, but such attainment, by God's gift, the design and work of God's love, the object of God's law, providence, revelation, in nature and grace.

The ministration of all this historic evidence, this unity and independence of forty centuries, appealing to our inward consciousness of guilt and moral death, demands, at the same time, our own believing appeal to God's mercy in persevering prayer; without which habit no evidence can possibly become convincing by experience; no knowledge of God, or of spiritual life, or of God's own truth, except by those inward means of grace, described in God's word, energized by the Spirit of Christ, without the use of which, the letter killeth, and "the language of the Scriptures, in the most faithful translation, and in the purest and plainest English, must nevertheless continue to be a dead language: a sun-dial by moonlight." This is the testimony of Coleridge himself, wrung from his own experience, and removing all previous doubt, by discovery of his own spiritual wants.

The very fact of a divine revelation, a word from God, is founded on the condition of human nature, as being so depraved as to need regeneration and a Saviour. Deny the depravity and you consistently deny

the revelation, and these two things must go together. Denying the depravity, you deny the divine Saviour, the Regenerating Spirit, the eternal death, every thing that must make up revelation if a revelation were necessary. So that the revelation left, after all these sweeping negations, would not be worth the trouble of giving, and would certainly be a very different revelation from that which we have received.

The spiritual dial necessitates, in order to its use, a belief in God, our light, our life. It is nothing without Him; we make it a mockery of our own being, without consulting Him. For law and lesson, natural, historical, divine, are providence and discipline, appointed and administered by a Lawgiver, to the ends of true righteousness, and happiness. All law teaches God, and is a revelation of and from Him.

Here the Hebrews were lifted up, high above all other nations, into the breathing of an atmosphere of spiritual knowledge and experience, that entered into their life's blood, circulating through their whole system, political, social, religious. In this atmosphere the Hebrew believers grew and worked; and the eye, the face, the intellect of the nation, the character and complexion, the habits of thought, feeling, reasoning, were enlivened with the colors of health, strength, activity. God dealt with them, *medicated* their frames, educated, taught them, as the fabled oriental physician did his unwilling patient, by the handling of their very crutches, their weapons, their instruments of war and agriculture, their landed estates and enjoyments, their social feasts and political systems, as well as their rites of worship.



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The Hebrews were not at any time wanting in native genius, out of which might have sprung poets like Homer, philosophers like Plato. Their Apocryphal literature, with all its deficiencies and blots, shows this. It contains chapters as admirably written, as profound in thought, as true in philosophy, as the pages of Plato. At the same time the moment we step out from the Hebrew Scriptures of the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, we find a very great general and particular deterioration. The seal of a manifest divine inspiration and system of truth is not there, but a mixture of fables, and a reliance on human merit, and morals, and the many inventions that men have wrought out for smoothing the way to heaven.

In the world's common literature there are all the elements of a natural fire; wood, coals, smoke, flame, air, heat, light, but no divine inspiration. In the Hebrew literature there is God and man together; but over and above all human elements, the infinite breathing and life of a divine force; God causing the wrath of man to praise Him; a perfect holiness, a self-conscious, self-existent omniscience and omnipotence; a knowledge and control of every human heart in connection with every other heart, and an infinite wisdom, and eternally benevolent purpose and plan. Here is the impress of a governing Creator and God, but nowhere else is there any atmosphere of truth that immortality could breathe.

Now if there be a mind absolutely destitute of faith in God; one of those enormous anomalies described in the book of Deuteronomy as examples of the possibility and cause of all evil practices;—“*children in whom is no*

*faith;*”—no, not even in the truth, love, and self-existence of their Heavenly Father; to such a mind no revelation of spiritual truth is possible.

In such a mind there could be no belief in miracles, no belief in prophecy, no belief in divine inspiration. Any prediction proved by history to have been true would be rejected as certainly written after the event. And this would be one of the accepted canons of criticism, striking death through all the reasonings of life in the Scriptures, and prepossessing the mind, at the fountains of all literature, with the words of the murderer and liar from the beginning. But our Saviour said to the Jews, when He was charging them with this very crime of rejecting as a blasphemer Him whom God hath sanctified and sent into the world, “He that is of God heareth God’s words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.” There can therefore be no uncertainty as to what are the words of God, nor any just doubt as to the meaning of them, for by them God will judge the world. But if a

“*Blind* unbelief is sure to err,  
And scan God’s work in vain,”

how much more a *cool calculating unbelief*, such as that of profoundly learned scholars, armed with a logic that sets at defiance all the reasonings of Christ from God’s word, and argues against them from postulates that, according to John’s declaration, “MAKE GOD A LIAR.”

It is man’s word testifying against God’s. Such is Ewald’s “History of the People of Israel”; the Divine Sun shut out, and God’s own sun-dial studied by the torch-light of human unbelief and credulity. A man

who rejects the supernatural in history, and denies the possibility of prophecy, puts himself under bonds to pronounce the Bible a complicated hypocrisy and falsehood, and those who professed to have been inspired of God to write it the greatest of impostors. This charge includes Moses, David, Isaiah, Christ, and the apostles.

The force of this argument of blasphemy is the greater, by the infinitude and eternity of its consequences. Inspiration is a fact forerunning all existing manuscripts, and securing, out of the very variations and uncertainties of them, the certainties of Divine Foreknowledge and prophecy *for man's guidance by words*, according to which Christ Himself has declared that GOD WILL JUDGE THE WORLD. Such a known infallible inspiration is therefore the very postulate of Christ's own reasoning as the world's Saviour; even His reasoning with the Jews, who were to be judged righteously by that word concerning Christ, which had been revealed to them for all mankind.—Compare John v. 38, 45–47, and viii. 44, 47, and xii. 48, 49, 50, with Rom. i. 25, and ii. 11, 12, 16, and iii. 4, 5, 6. If not infallible, then not divine; and if it can possibly be broken, then not of God. An infallible inspiration is not *our supposition* of what *ought to be*, but Christ's affirmation of what *must be, and is*, or *no divine Scriptures* at all. Now the essential element of inspiration, that which belongs to the very possibility of a divine revelation, must inevitably determine and rule the method and manner of it. The style, the words, the imagery, as well as the thoughts, all things indeed, must be subservient, must be the sure ministers and builders of

the temple of faith. Infallible truths could not be put at the disposal of fallible critics, to interweave with fables so contrived that every generation may construct for itself a justifying argument of unbelief and blasphemy. Infallible truths require believing and inspired masters of the language in which they are conveyed.

Internal evidence, extending over four thousand years and appealing to the conscience at every step, is omnipotent. Once perceived in its unity, the most sagacious scepticism, the most critical jealousy, is powerless against it. It is difficult to suppose any capacity of belief left in any mind that could reject such a weight of moral evidence, as being the work of an impostor. There must be proved the existence of a supernatural, all-seeing, and all-knowing impostor, for the ability to invent and sustain such a fiction.

The indefatigable microscopic investigation and accuracy of modern historic scholars of great learning and acuteness, analyzing and dissipating as unrealities or falsehoods many things that had always been accepted as fixtures of truth, have taught us scepticism rightfully, in regard to mere human testimony, and have made doubt a teacher instead of an inquirer. The Tichborne trial, it has been remarked, has done more to weaken Englishmen's faith in the word of professed experts, and consequently in what are called the facts of history as recorded even by the actors, and much more in the verdicts of uninformed jurors, than aught that has happened for ages. What is there that can be supported by evidence? What that can release us from uncertainty and doubt? Assuredly, in every matter that concerns our eternal welfare, nothing but

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the word of God. And therefore there must have been given us such a word, such an infallible guide.

The cause of many of the mistakes and misjudgments of men in handling divine truth is found in the want of a just balancing of the two eternal certainties given to us of God,—a Divine word and a Divine Spirit. There is no certainty on earth without these gifts from heaven in their unity; neither is there any possible adjustment of forces between them, or right conclusion from them, except by the constant prayerful reference of each to the other, and the incessant, anxious comparison and testing of one with and by the other. Extremes of every kind—fanaticism and presumption, superstition and atheism,—have resulted from exclusive reliance upon either; both together are the source of truth and power. The separation is just as if you halved a pair of scissors, using first one blade, then the other, without the leverage of force from both, or as if you cut a promissory note in two. The Spirit without the word, or the word without the Spirit, can no more replace a divine infallible inspiration of saving efficacy for the soul and for security from error, than a metallic figured rim, without the magnet, can make a chronometer or compass.

A man must go to God for every one of God's words, "praying *for*, and praying *in* the Holy Ghost," and thus assured, may build up himself infallibly in "God's most holy faith." But relying on the word without the Spirit, presumption makes it falsehood:—on the Spirit without the word,—it is clouds and wind without rain, and the mind is driven about as a balloon among them.

It is the same with science; death from life instead of life from death. Milestones set up by mistake are permitted to rule out celestial time; and calculations from a changing earth nullify celestial certainties.

Science is becoming a game of speculations among the infinitudes; and time, space, and eternity are loaded dice for the players. Materialism is a kingdom of physical epics, the paradise of miracles by natural selection, and science is playing Baron Munchausen among them. Some of the meetings of the British Association itself might be termed, without any great misnomer, the regatta of the scientific imagination, which faculty does not stand in need of facts in regard to the creation, but only to get the book of Genesis and the prepossessions of theology out of the way.

Then comes in that peculiar scientific faith, which Professors Tyndall and Huxley so marvellously distinguish as a backward vision of the prepotency of matter with life and mind rising out of it.

From this forlorn atheistic materialism proceed the methods of that destructive criticism of the Scriptures which is now for a season sweeping as an oriental plague across much of our popular literature, our liberal theology, our professorships of science, our encyclopedias, and even our schools of preparation for the ministry of the gospel. It is a disastrous baptism of doubt, through which, even after the glory of the seventeenth century of English literature, our age seems to be passing. The plague runs from the Hebrew Scriptures to the Greek; and the chips of a philological erudition are thrown for fuel into the furnaces of unbelief.

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“Two men of war,” says Captain Basil Hall, “one larger than the other, were sailing in company, when the man on the lookout from the larger vessel observed a ship on the horizon, which was not reported by the watch of the smaller, and consequently the smaller watchman got the punishment of cat-o’-nine-tails, for his supposed negligence. The same thing happening again, at length it struck the commander that the mast-head of the frigate being much taller than that of the sloop, and the earth being round, the watch on the bigger vessel would of course see farther than on the smaller, it being impossible to see through a section of the earth’s curvature.”

Now the scientific sceptic’s intolerance and spiritual ignorance (for, not believing in the existence of a revealing Spirit, he can not have spiritual teaching) would administer the *cat-o’-nine-tails* of his criticism upon the back of the believer, whose spiritual sight is higher up, on one of his Majesty’s frigates, and is moreover sharpened and far sighted by exercise, while the sceptic’s sense is down on deck or at the mast-head of nothing better than a coal lighter or a pleasure yacht, his horizon and his vision being limited accordingly.

By the horizon of his *ne-science* he would limit and condemn the prophetic *science* and worship of the believer, whom God has lifted up by faith to the sweep of an interminable horizon, no longer merely secular, but spiritual and eternal.

“Thou, who art Life and Light, I see Thee spread  
Thy glories through these regions of the dead.  
I hear Thee call the sleeper: Up ! behold  
The earth unveiled to thee, the heavens unrolled !

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On thy transformed soul celestial light  
 Barsts; and the earth transfigured, on thy sight  
 Breaks a new sphere! Ay, stand in glad amaze  
 While all its figures, opening on thy gaze,  
 Unfold new meanings. Thou shalt understand  
 Its mystic hierograph, thy God's own hand!"—DANA.

The air, the sky, the stars, are God's truth, the rocks, the shells, the trees, the flowers, the grass. There is not a falsehood, nor an *aura* of falsehood or doubt in all this breathing world; but only the character and the sign manual of Him who made it. Cowper's beautiful poetry, and Milton's and Wordsworth's, and the 19th Psalm and the 104th, are the vision of the mind in the loving sight of God's truth, as we are born into it. But it requires a stronger and more perfectly balanced mind to hold a truth with emphasis and powerful grasp, than it does to hold a doubt, and be possessed with it.

"Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;  
 Our meddling intellect  
 Misshapes the beauteous forms of things;  
 We murder to dissect.

"Enough of Science and of Art;  
 Close up these barren leaves;  
 Come forth, and bring with you a heart,  
 That watches and receives."

WORDSWORTH'S "TABLES TURNED."

The notice taken of the oppositions of "science falsely so called," or of what is sometimes styled *modern scientific thought*, is not from any fear that Chris-



tianity will suffer, but (1), that men will suffer by the hiding and perversion of it; (2) because of the fascinating influence of scientific *speculation*, and its pre-possessive power over the young; (3) because, as is often the case, the positions from which the deniers of the supernatural proceed offer admirable opportunities to bring up the strength of the Christian evidence in a new array.

We have the advantage of a cross-examination of erroneous theories and arguments. Napoleon sometimes in the heat of the conflict, observing the strategy of the enemy, changed the combination and massing of his forces so as to gain the victory out of those very movements of his adversaries, which they supposed and intended to have been decisive for his destruction. He always delighted to detect in their most confident arrangements the point where they themselves made him conqueror. Modern infidelity, in the vastness and bold assumptions of its subtlest methods, is the occasion of new modes of demonstration, new combinations of old eternal truth, never before seen in such powerful sudden flashing lights, in such radiances, as of a *corona* produced by an attempted eclipse.

We are therefore *absolutely certain*, and we hold that citadel. God has given *certainities* as the *foundation*; and we will not make doubt our master-builder, though so advised by some modern scientists. Faith is the life of perfect health, and strong, wise action. Doubt, as a habit, is scrofulous, and some of the noblest natures have nearly perished by it.

We could multiply examples, profoundly impressive and instructive, from England, Germany, France, Switzerland; from before and after the revival of learning and the Reformation. The most conclusive and satisfactory of all instances, is that of the profound and candid German scholar and statesman, Barthold Niebuhr, born at Copenhagen in 1776, son of the celebrated traveller Carsten Niebuhr. He inherited the distinguishing characteristics of his father; integrity and truthfulness, the habit of accuracy, admiration of the noble and beautiful, zeal for justice, liberty and truth, abhorrence of superficiality and display. At the age of thirty-one he was master of twenty languages. He was "one who can only exist in the pure mountain air, who must have freedom for the soul and intellect." His views of "education, as being valuable only so far as it is a true approximation to a spiritual life," he carried out in the training of his son Marcus. He speaks of "the recognition of *the incomprehensible*, the admission of which, and the constant reference to it, *distinguish the SEEKER in nature from the ordinary learned man, and must some day throw a new light on all our sciences.* Faith without testimony is impossible, and we must look to the succession of historical events for the confirmation of our faith in the existence and providence of God."

Lamenting his own tendency to doubt, and his want of a childlike faith in the Word of God, Niebuhr records his determination that his beloved child Marcus shall be protected and preserved from such an unbelieving prejudice by the encouragement and fostering of the *habit of faith* from earliest childhood; by the

discipline of FAITH AS A FACULTY, beginning in the ground-work of the soul, before external knowledge is possible. All other treatment of the child's mind is only savage cruelty. But the *teaching* of God's love by the parent to the child, becomes the sacred germ of a living faith in the love of the Heavenly Father, that by the fostering divine Spirit shall be proof against all infidelity. What else is wisdom or love, or can be? What but the flinging of the mind, tender and inexperienced, out into the wilderness of doubt?

"I am thinking a great deal about my son's education," says Niebuhr: "*He shall believe in the letter of the Old and New Testament, and I shall nurture in him, from his infancy, a firm faith in all that I have lost, or feel uncertain about.*"—"Oh that such a faith may one day be my own portion!"—"When the confusion of ideas and half truths is the greatest, it is exactly at such a time that principles which have been early implanted and carefully watched over, so as to gain all the strength of prejudice, confer extraordinary power, both over the world within and that without. He who begins his course thus armed, fights with a weapon which is wanting to those around him."

"His heart shall be raised to God, *as soon as he is capable of a sentiment; and his childish feelings shall be expressed in prayers and hymns: all the religious practices that have fallen into disuse in our age, shall be a necessity and a law to him.*"

"I wish, I strive with all my heart, that he may grow up with *the most absolute faith in religion: yet so that his faith may not be an outward adhesion, that must fall away from him afterwards, when his rea-*

son comes into play; but that from his earliest years the way may be prepared for *the union of faith and reason.*" If ever there was profound wisdom gained from sad experience, it is here.

Describing what he considers to be true faith, Niebuhr recognizes it as the highest good. "But it would only be possible for me," says he, "to attain it through supernatural communication, or wonders and signs beheld with my own eyes. It is one thing to respect, or not to reject, quite another really to believe as in one's own existence. Several of my acquaintance have a very earnest belief, though of very different shades; there are others who fully imagine they possess religion, yet to whom one can scarcely attribute more than a self-delusive assumption of it."

We know this illustrious scholar as the great iconoclast of historic dragons, myths, *nehushthans*; a man of learning and authority, of critical keenness and sagacity unrivalled, of sincerity in the pursuit of truth, with power in the detection of falsehood. It was his very experience that the world is so full of lies, and human testimony so suspicious, as he had proved, by his own researches, that carried him into a habit of doubt, even in the presence of incontestable realities. For this very reason his testimony, over against the scorn of a religious faith by such brilliant teachers as Huxley and Tyndal, is priceless and overwhelming.

The sad reflection of Niebuhr that he himself may have irrecoverably lost the capacity of this faith, from habitual disuse of its exercise, gives a melancholy weight to his parental anxiety for the right guiding of his child's mind. Beautifully illustrative is the re-

mark of Ruskin that "childhood often holds a truth with its feeble fingers, which the grasp of manhood can not retain, which it is the pride of utmost age to recover." And so are Wordsworth's lines, on the soul that riseth with us, our life's star, and the heaven that lies about us in our infancy, and the shades of the prison-house, closing on the growing boy;

"At length the man perceives the vision die away,  
And fade into the light of common day."

The knowledge of faith and prayer, and a conviction of the supernatural reality and worth of such spiritual habits in the soul, *and in the life of nations as well as individuals*, have been wrought even in minds long neglectful of these elements, and in men the most sagacious, the most unlikely to be imposed upon by shams and hypocrisies; men of the broadest forecast, the profoundest practical wisdom, and philosophical analysis, and men who have run the gauntlet both of unbelief and doubt, till the heart has cried out for deliverance. To the example of the celebrated and learned German historian, we add that of Franklin, the not less celebrated American philosopher and statesman. If the records of all nations were ransacked, it would be impossible to find instances of minds farther removed from any predisposition to credulity, or better secured, by mental habits and the knowledge of mankind, from the domination of imposture. The legacies of belief which they have left for their countrymen are possessions for mankind.

The conclusion in the mind of Niebuhr, as we have

noted from his own letters in regard to his own children was, that they should be educated under the full power of the most sacred prepossessions of divine truth. There should be formed in their minds, so far as a careful education could do it, an anchoring steadfastness of assurance in God and in Christ, and a power of religious faith and reasoning, which he himself, to his infinite sorrow, had lost, and feared he could never regain. They should thus be kept from that shipwreck and despair, in which he had almost perished.

To the same conclusion Franklin had come politically in regard to the nation. The people of the United States should be educated under the full power of sacred prepossessions. They should believe in God, and in their responsibility to Him as a nation, and in the wisdom of their political constitution, as a chart framed under His guidance in answer to prayer.

The scene at the congress of representatives in America after the War of the Revolution, undertaking what never yet had been accomplished by any nation, namely, to settle beforehand, not the principles only, but the written constitution enshrining them, for a people that within one hundred years were to number fifty millions, under the one government of forty United States; the scene when Franklin addressed the assembly in behalf of the wisdom, necessity, and duty of a national acknowledgment of responsibility to God, and prayer to Him for guidance, is in some respects more impressive than any thing recorded in the annals of history. Its painting would be worthy the

genius of Raphael and Leonardo da Vinci together. It is somewhat strange that in the history of the American Revolution it has had so little adequate illustration. For never did philosopher or statesman utter the last public expression of his thoughts more impressively, or on a more important and sublime occasion.

Through an active and observant life, from the age of fifteen to that of eighty-four, Franklin's mind travelled from the doctrine of necessity and fate to that of God and prayer; the latter conviction having delivered him from the habit of doubting divine truth to that of doubting himself and human error. When the congress had assembled, in convention, Franklin had reached the age of eighty-one.

No man in the world had become more celebrated, no man was more admired, no man had received greater adulation. America was better known by Franklin than by all the other actors in our history together. Such men as Edmund Burke and Sir Samuel Romilly in England, and men of all classes and stations in France, from the king and queen downwards, were admirers of his character and genius. There had been no such example in modern history of unaffected simplicity and modesty amidst such universal tributes of respect, confidence, and love.

Nevertheless, his long residence in France had impressed multitudes with the belief that he had returned to his own country with the opinions of the French revolutionary philosophers full upon him, and a tendency, probably as strong as Jefferson's, towards the practical infidelity of that people. So regarded, Franklin watched the deliberations of the congress

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many weeks patiently and calmly, taking as yet little part in them, except in the industrious application of his mind to the great problems that were laid before the representatives to solve. And the greatest of these was that presented by Franklin himself;—the obligation of a national religious faith in God, and the duty of seeking Him in supplication for His guiding providence and Spirit.

This was Franklin's religious philosophy, and he would have inspired the whole representative congress with it, if he could have done it. But he could not breathe into those whom he addressed the fervor and sincerity of his own convictions. They regarded him with amazement, and listened as the multitude of the Arcopagites listened to Paul.

At a very early period of his public career, we find Franklin issuing proposals for the education of youth in Pennsylvania, in which he said, "History will also afford frequent opportunities of showing the necessity of a *public religion*, from its usefulness to the public; the advantage of a religious character among private persons; the mischief of superstition; and the excellency of the *Christian religion* above all others, ancient or modern."

In 1748, an association having been formed for the defence of the Province of Pennsylvania, Franklin proposed to the governor and council, "*calling in the aid of religion*, to promote reformation, and *implore the blessing of Heaven on the undertaking*. They embraced the motion, but as it was the first fast ever thought of in the Province, the secretary had no precedent from which to draw the proclamation. My ed-



ucation in New England," says Franklin, "where a fast is proclaimed every year, was here of some advantage. I drew it up in the accustomed style; it was translated into German, printed in both languages, and circulated through the Province." At this time Franklin was thirty-three years of age, and the nubelief of his youth had returned to the beliefs of his childhood and of his earliest education.

From a child Franklin was so fond of reading that all the little money that came into his hands was always laid out in books. And the very first collection of books he ever made, the very nest egg of his library, was of John Bunyan's works in separate little volumes—a purchase induced by his love of the "Pilgrim's Progress." That and "Plutarch's Lives," with the book of De Foe's called an "Essay on Projects," and another of Dr. Mather's, called "Essays to do Good," gave him, he says, a turn of thinking that had an influence on some of the principal future events of his life. It was "his bookish inclination" that determined his father to make him a printer, and he began his journeymanship under his brother James at the age of twelve years. At the age of fifteen, "after doubting by turns of several points of principles and morals, as he found them disputed in the different books he read, he began," he says, "to doubt of Revelation itself, till he became a thorough deist, and at the age of nineteen wrote a pamphlet to prove the doctrine of fate, from the supposed attributes of God. But in 1730, at the age of twenty-four, he wrote a pamphlet on the other side of the question, "which began with laying for its foundation this fact, that almost all men

in all ages and countries have at times made use of prayer." His earlier pamphlet "appeared not near so clever a performance as he once thought it," and his doubts now took the form of self-doubting. He "doubted whether some error had not insinuated itself unperceived into his argument, so as to infect all that followed, as is common in metaphysical reasonings."

At the age of fifty-eight, in 1764, we find him writing to his daughter Sarah: "Go constantly to church, whoever preaches. The act of devotion in the Common Prayer is your principal business there, and if properly attended to will do more toward amending the heart than sermons generally can do. For they were composed [the prayers] by men of much greater piety and wisdom than our common composers of sermons can pretend to be; and therefore I wish you would never miss the prayer days. I pray that God's blessing may attend you, which is worth more than a thousand of mine, though they are never wanting."

From this impressive record we pass on to the age of seventy-eight in 1784. We find Franklin reviewing the course of his own and his early partner, Strahan's, prosperity, and the causes of the success of the American Revolution. "But after all, my dear friend, do not imagine that I am vain enough to ascribe our success to any superiority in any of these points. I am too well acquainted with all the springs and levers of our machine not to see that our human means were unequal to our undertaking; and that, if it had not been for the justice of our cause and the consequent interposition of Providence, in which we had faith, we

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must have been ruined. If I had ever before been an atheist, I should now have been convinced of the being and government of a Deity! It is He who abases the proud and favors the humble. May we never forget His goodness to us, and may our future conduct manifest our gratitude."

Franklin's motion in the Federal Convention for opening their deliberations with prayer was introduced after four or five weeks spent in confusion of counsels, without progress, without unity, but with perplexed and opposing interests and schemes. It seemed as if only a divine interposition and grace could inspire the members with patriotic confidence and wisdom.

"In this situation of this assembly," said Franklin, "groping, as it were, in the dark to find political truth, and scarce able to distinguish it when presented to us, how has it happened, sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of Lights to illuminate our understandings? In the beginning of the contest with Britain, when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayers in this room for the Divine protection. Our prayers, sir, were heard, and they were graciously answered. All of us who were engaged in the struggle must have observed frequent instances of a superintending Providence in our favor. To that kind Providence we owe this happy opportunity of consulting in peace on the means of establishing our future national felicity. And have we now forgotten that powerful Friend? Or do we imagine we no longer need His assistance? I have lived, sir, a long time, and the longer I live the more convincing proofs I see of this truth, that God

governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow can not fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid? We have been assured, sir, in the sacred writings, that ‘except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.’ I firmly believe this; and I also believe that without His concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel; we shall be divided by our little, partial, local interests: our projects will be confounded, and we ourselves shall become a reproach and a byword down to future ages. And what is worse, mankind may hereafter, from this unfortunate instance, despair of establishing government by human wisdom, and leave it to chance, war, and conquest. I, therefore, beg leave to move that henceforth prayers, imploring the assistance of Heaven and its blessing on our deliberations, be held in this assembly every morning before we proceed to business, and that one or more of the clergy of this city be requested to officiate in that service.”

The only notice by Dr. Franklin of the result of his motion was that of simple astonishment, thus: “The convention, except three or four persons, thought prayers unnecessary!”

The names of those three or four persons, supporting Franklin’s motion, would have been an illustrious catalogue of witnesses. It is amazing that their petition for the acknowledgment of our national dependence upon God could have been so utterly disregarded.

To-day we are verging on the centennial anniversary of the adoption of this constitution; and in less than fifty years, a hundred and fifty millions of immortal

beings will be under its rule, if it please God to spare us as a nation. We may well read and apply Wordsworth's sonnet ON THE OBLIGATIONS OF CIVIL TO RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

“Ungrateful Country, if thou e'er forget  
The sons who for thy civil rights have bled;  
How, like a Roman, Sydney bowed his head,  
And Russel's milder blood the scaffold wet !  
But these had fallen for profitless regret,  
Had not thy holy Church her champions bred,  
*And claims from other worlds inspired  
The Star of Liberty to rise. Nor yet,  
(Grace this within thy heart!) if spiritual things  
Be lost through apathy, or scorn, or fear,  
Shall thou thy humbler franchises support,  
However hardly won or justly dear;*  
WHAT CAME FROM HEAVEN TO HEAVEN BY NATURE CLINGS,  
AND IF DISSEVERED THENCE ITS COURSE IS SHORT.”

It is a great gain when, in aid of our own investigation, we can bring to the illustration of the Scriptures, not merely the notes and discoveries of profound theological inquirers, such as Butler, Howe, Edwards, Chalmers, but also the example, experience, and conclusions of such men as Niebuhr and Franklin. So the witnesses and vouchers for God's Word, and the providential demonstrations of its truth are multiplying, as by compound interest, through every age.



# FAITH, DOUBT, AND EVIDENCE.



## I.

### ADVENTURES OF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF FRANKLIN—ITS COPIES AND TRANSLATIONS.

Towards the close of the year 1789, Dr. Franklin presented to his friend M. le Veillard, then Mayor of Passy in France, a *copy* of his Autobiography, as far as at that time he had written it. His death occurred shortly afterwards, on the 17th April, 1790, at the age of eighty-four years and three months. All his papers, including the *original* of that copy which had been given to his friend, passed into possession of his grandson, William Temple Franklin, who engaged to prepare the life and writings of Franklin, from those materials, for publication in London.

In preparing this work, its editor, Franklin's grandson, gave up to Madame le Veillard, whose husband had perished by the guillotine, *the original autograph* manuscript of Franklin's life, written with

his own hand, *in exchange for that copy of it* which Franklin had given to his friend. Perhaps the editor may have done this at the request of Madame le Veillard, in order that the printers might use her copy in printing the work, so that Franklin's own autograph might be preserved untouched, unsoiled.

Be this as it may, the *autograph* had gone from the possession of the descendants of Franklin; and at the death of Madame le Veillard the original manuscript passed to her daughter; and at her death in 1834, it passed to her cousin M. de Senarmont. Then it came into possession of Senarmont's grandson, and at length, in 1867, this gentleman, M. P. de Senarmont, transferred it to Mr. John Bigelow, then Minister of the United States at Paris.

This invaluable MS. as it came into Mr. Bigelow's possession in perfect preservation, consisted of two hundred and twenty folio pages, and was half bound in red morocco. A blank margin of *half the page's width* was left on each page, that the writer might have ample room for whatever additions or corrections he might choose to make at a future time. Accordingly, these margins were frequently so occupied. Every page was in clear and distinct handwriting, but with *many interlinations and erasures*. The whole was accompanied with a memorandum written in French and English on the fly-



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leaves, beginning as follows: "The Life of Benjamin Franklin, written by himself. The only manuscript entirely of his own handwriting." Then follows a brief mention of the presentation of the *copy* of this original to M. le Veillard, and of the manner in which *that copy* came to be *exchanged* for the original autograph itself; so that this, "*the original and only manuscript*" in Franklin's handwriting, "came by inheritance into the hands of M. de Senarmont, M. le Veillard's grand-nephew."

It is stated in the memorandum that when William Temple Franklin, Dr. Franklin's grandson, came to Europe in order to publish the works of his illustrious grandfather, M. le Veillard having perished on the revolutionary scaffold, the grandson of Franklin requested from Madame le Veillard "the correct and fine copy given by his grandfather, *as more convenient for the printer.*"

"If I give it to you," answered Madame le Veillard, "I shall have nothing more of our friend."

Then answered Dr. Franklin's grandson, "I will give you in place of the copy, *the original manuscript of my grandfather.*" And so it came about, and is verified.

It is not stated in this memorandum *when* the exchange of manuscripts was made. But there is a letter from Franklin's grandson to M. le Veil-

lard, dated, Philadelphia, 22d May, 1790, announcing Franklin's death, and saying that the original autograph of the Memoirs was in his grandson's possession, and that he should probably go to Europe to publish his grandfather's works. And a few months after this letter was written, *we find him in London*, preparing, or intending to prepare, those works for publication. A letter from M. le Veillard to the *Journal de Paris*, dated at Passy, 21st March, 1791, states that Franklin's grandson "*is now in England*, occupied with this work, and is expected in France in a few days, to complete it." We have also letters from the grandson to M. le Veillard in 1791 and 1792, referring to the intended publication, as being in good train, but no suggestion as to any use to be made by the printers, of the MS. copy in possession of M. le Veillard.

Meantime, a French translation of the Autobiography of Franklin appeared in Paris in 1791; and M. le Veillard stated in his note to the *Journal de Paris* that this publication did in fact contain "the commencement of the Memoirs of Dr. Franklin, *almost entirely conforming* to the manuscript which I (M. le Veillard) possess"; but that the translator did never have that manuscript from him (M. le Veillard), and that the translation, wherever he, the translator, might have got the original, was only a

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*fragment* of the Autobiography, ending in the year 1730, and containing *hardly a third part* of M. le Veillard's copy, which he said itself came down only to 1757, and did not terminate the work, "the remainder of which is in the hands of Mr. W. T. Franklin."

Thus we find that the first publication of any portion of Franklin's Autobiographical Memoirs was in French, and was translated either from the original English MS., in possession of Franklin's grandson, or *from another copy*, which may have been in possession of Mr. Vaughan, as such a copy had been promised him by Dr. Franklin, and may have been given him. But the translator gave no account of "the manner in which the original manuscript of these Memoirs, which are written in the English language, came into my possession." Mr. Bigelow says that it embraced only the first eighty-seven pages of the manuscript. And the translator of that portion suggests that Franklin may himself have written more of his own history, and that, if so, his heirs could not fail to publish it, some day or other, though his family would not be likely "to disclose any other than the most brilliant period of his life."

"If my conjecture prove right," said he, "if the Memoirs which they are about to publish under the

name of Franklin should be mutilated; if the first part, so essential to readers capable of feeling and judging, should be suppressed, I shall applaud myself for having preserved it; and the world will be obliged to me for having enabled them to follow the early developments of the genius, and the first exertions of the sublime and profound mind of a man who afterwards penetrated the mystery of electricity, and discovered the secret measures of despotism;—who preserved the universe from the ravages of thunder, and his native country from the horrors of tyranny.”

There is also a letter from Dr. Price, dated at Hackney, June 19, 1790, written to a gentleman in Philadelphia, remarking on the death, character, and Autobiographical Memoirs of Franklin. The account of his death in April, 1790, had just been received by Dr. Price from this gentleman; and in acknowledging this favor, Dr. Price speaks of the Autobiography as follows: “The account which he has left of his life will show, in a striking example, how a man, by talents, industry, and integrity, may rise from obscurity to the first eminence and consequence in the world; but it brings his history no lower than the year 1757, and I understand that *since he sent over the copy, which I have read*, he has been able to make no additions to it.”

The very first publication at all, of any portion of Franklin's Autobiography, being this *French translation*, the first publication in *English* was a translation from this French translation, in 1793. Two versions, Mr. Bigelow states, were published in London, two years after the French publication in Paris, and both versions were translations from the French. The first of these versions was the *only English version printed and extant in America, down to 1817*, when the edition by Franklin's grandson first made its appearance.

And this first translation from the French back into English continues to this day to be republished by some of the largest houses, not only in Europe but in America, under the impression that it is both the genuine, original Autobiography of Franklin in his own language, and complete. How many persons there are therefore, who have never read one word of Franklin's own writing, in his own inimitable simplicity, purity, and beauty of style and language, conveying his thoughts in a medium as artless and transparent as the summer air.

When these translations and retranslations were first made and published, the original MS. in Franklin's handwriting was in possession exclusively of his grandson. But we know that previous to the year 1802 it had passed by exchange into the possession

of Madame le Veillard, and by inheritance into the hands of M. de Senarmont. We have this landmark and proof in a singularly interesting record in the diary of Sir Samuel Romilly, written during his visit to France in 1802. The record is given in full by Mr. Bigelow, but we prefer to copy it for a reason which will be seen, from the second volume of the *Memoirs of the Life of Romilly*, edited by his sons, and published by Murray, in London, in 1840.

“Sept. 6.” Romilly writes, “we went to Passy with Madame Gautier.” “Sep. 7. Madame Gautier procured for me the reading of the original MS. of Dr. Franklin’s life. There are only two copies—this, and one which Dr. F. took with a machine for copying letters, and which is in the possession of his grandson. Franklin gave the MS. to M. Viellard, of Passy, who was guillotined during the revolution. Upon his death, it came into the hands of his daughter or granddaughter, Madame Viellard, who is the present possessor of it. It appears evidently to be the first draft written by Franklin; for in a great many places, the word originally written is erased with a pen, and a word nearly synonymous is substituted in its place, not over the other, but further on, so as manifestly to show that the correction was made at the time of the original composition. The MS. contains a great many additions, made upon a very

*wide margin; but I did not find that a single passage was anywhere struck out. Part of the work, but not quite half of it, has been translated into French, and from the French retranslated into English. The life comes down no lower than to the year 1757."*

It is to be noted that in Murray's edition of the *Memoirs of the Life of Romilly*, the name of Dr. Franklin's friend is given as Viellard instead of Veillard, as written by Mr. Bigelow from the French memorandum. It is much as if the word Dolman in French were spelled Oldman in English, or Dolbuck, Oldbuck. It is worthy of note as an example of the importance of the greater part of the differences found in manuscripts, say thirty thousand variations in the MSS. of the Scriptures.

And yet, a letter dropped or added might carry down to all time the difference between falsehood and truth. Lightfoot remarks upon the career of Gehazi, "Gehazi's covetousness brings upon him Naaman's leprosy. The text hath divinely omitted a letter in one word, that it might the more brand him with a blot for this his villany. I will run after Naaman, saith he, and will take of him *mumah*, a blot, instead of *maumah*, somewhat." II Kings v. 29, *take somewhat of him*. It was the case of a wicked man taken in his own mischief, and bound in a life-long experience to the body of his own death.

There are other such records, not in the Hebrew Scriptures only.

The interest with which Romilly examined this autograph of Franklin may be judged from a record by Romilly in 1783, on a visit to Paris, of an interview with Franklin, then residing at Passy. It was the first and only time he ever had the happiness of conversing with him. He made this visit with his friend John Baynes. "Dr. Franklin," he says, "was indulgent enough to converse a good deal with us, whom he observed to be young men very desirous of improving by his conversation. Of all the celebrated persons whom in my life I have chanced to see, Dr. Franklin, both from his appearance and his conversation, seemed to me the most remarkable. His venerable patriarchal appearance, the simplicity of his manner and language, and the novelty of his observations, at least the novelty of them at that time to me, impressed me with an opinion of him, as of *one of the most extraordinary men that ever existed*. The American Constitutions were then very recently published. I remember his reading us some passages out of them, and expressing some surprise that the *French government had permitted the publication of them* in France. They certainly produced a very great sensation at Paris, the effects of which were probably felt many years afterward."



II.

RECOVERY AND EXAMINATION OF THE AUTOGRAPH  
BY MR. BIGELOW.

It appears from passages in existing letters from Dr. Franklin to his friends M. le Veillard and Mr. Vaughan, that in the year 1789 he had given up all expectation of being able to complete the Memoirs as he had designed, but that he was *having a copy of them, as far as he had then written them*, prepared for these two gentlemen. To M. le Veillard he says, Sept. 5, 1789, "I have not been able to continue my Memoirs, and now I suppose I shall never finish them. *Benjamin has made a copy of what is done, for you*, which shall be sent by the first safe opportunity."

To Mr. Vaughan he says, June 3, 1789, referring to his ill health, "I have but little time in which I can write any thing. My grandson, however *is copying what is done*, which will be sent to you for your opinion by the next vessel; and not merely for your opinion, but for your advice." And in another letter to Mr. Vaughan, Nov. 2, 1789, he says, "What is already done *I now send you*. In the meantime I desire and expect that you will not suffer any copy of it, or of any part of it, to be taken for any purpose whatever."

In this letter he requests Dr. Price, with Mr. Vaughan, to read, critically examine, and give their candid opinion, whether to publish or suppress it.

In reference to these copies of the Memoirs, here stated as having been in preparation, we have the additional testimony of the Duke de la Rochefoucault, in 1789, that "the two copies of the history of Franklin's own life,—one of which was sent by Franklin to London, to Dr. Price and Mr. Vaughan, and the other to Monsieur le Veillard and me (the Duke), reach no further than the year 1757." This is a direct affirmation that the two copies, which Franklin says in his letters were being prepared, and should be sent immediately, *were sent* to those for whom they were intended. And certainly the one intended for M. le Veillard and the Duke himself had been not only sent, but received and read by the Duke. And of both the copies he gives the same characteristic, as ending at the year 1757. This leaves scarcely a doubt that Mr. Vaughan's copy was in existence in London, as well as M. le Veillard's copy in France, at the same early date. But Sir Samuel Romilly in 1802 had no knowledge of any other copy except that which was in possession of Franklin's grandson; and all his knowledge of that may have been received from Madame Gautier, or Madame le Veillard herself.

It is a singular circumstance in the history of this autograph that until it came into the hands of Mr. Bigelow, that is, nearly one hundred years after it was commenced by Franklin, and dated at the country seat of the Bishop of St. Asaph's in England, in 1771, it had never once been collated with the copy of it in possession of Dr. Franklin's grandson, nor with the Memoirs printed from that copy, in 1817. Evidently the grandson of Franklin, when he exchanged the original autograph with M. le Veillard for that copy, had never himself examined it, nor did he ever attempt to verify the copy from which he printed, by comparison with the original, which Franklin wrote. He did not know that eight pages existed at the close of Franklin's Autobiography, which *did not exist in the copy which he used* in publishing the Memoirs. Nor was any one else aware of it. Nor did it ever come to light, until the careful collation and comparison made by Mr. Bigelow between the autograph which he received from M. de Senarmont in 1867 and the edition of the Memoirs in 1817, prepared in London by William Temple Franklin, "the first and only edition that ever purported to have been printed from the manuscript." But not from the autograph.

"The results of this collation," says Mr. Bigelow, "revealed the curious fact that *more than twelve hun-*

*dred separate and distinct changes* had been made in the text, and what is more remarkable, that the last eight pages of the manuscript, which are second in value to no other eight pages of the work, *were omitted entirely.*"

Mr. Bigelow gives us, from the first chapter of the MS., some specimens of these alterations, side by side with the original, showing that they were deliberate, and must have been the result of considerable work and contrivance on the part of the editor, substituting the suggestions of his own taste, and perhaps vanity, instead of the expressions of Franklin's own thought and style. Sometimes whole sentences are altered and reconstructed.

Mr. Bigelow proposes four questions: 1, By whom the changes were made? 2, How came the eight closing pages to be omitted? 3, Why was the publication deferred after the author's death twenty-seven years, from 1790 to 1817? and 4, "How happened it that this posthumous work, which may be read in nearly every written language, and is one of the half-dozen most widely popular books ever printed, should have filled the book marts of the world for a quarter of a century without having ever been verified by the original manuscript?"

A singularly interesting discussion of these points follows, with all the information that Mr. Bigelow

had been able to obtain from a variety of sources, published and unpublished; a most interesting and important disclosure, suggesting many thoughts, and fruitful in illustrations of the uncertainties that may attend the history of the productions of genius, even when the libraries of the world contain editions of them, besides works innumerable, of minutest examination and history of the periods when they were produced, and the events in which their authors played conspicuous parts in sight of all the nations.

Twelve hundred such alterations in a single autobiographical manuscript! And the changes of which Mr. Bigelow has presented the instances in the first chapter continued through the whole! This must have been, not indeed a labor of love, but a work of care and thought, such as it was, whatever the motives. This revision and these alterations would not have been made in the original autograph, and seem not to have been attempted, until that autograph had been exchanged for Madame le Veillard's copy. Then ensued the work of revision and preparation for the printer; and if we could see *that copy*, we should probably see the erasures, alterations, and interpolations, in the handwriting of Franklin's grandson; for beyond all doubt these manipulations of the text were his. And they manifest a careless disregard of the sacredness of the

bequest, an inappreciation of the truthfulness, artlessness, and simplicity of Franklin's narrative, a want of reverence towards Franklin's judgment, and a very surprising degree of presumption and vanity in regard to his own.

Yet these twelve hundred alterations, if every one of them was seen and commented on, *would make no difference in any man's impression of the truthfulness and reality of Franklin's Autobiography*, nor in any man's view of his character, nor in any man's opinion of his patriotism, or his statesmanship, or his merits as a philosopher, or his excellence as a man, or his great and wise influence in the counsels of his country, or his instrumentality, so calm and unobtrusive, yet so central, and prevailing, in the progress and success of the American Revolution. No man's confidence in the history of that revolution, or in the events recorded as facts, or referred to, or the secret causes of them disclosed in these Memoirs, would be shaken, not to say by twelve hundred, but by twelve thousand such variations. A man's impression both of Franklin and his country, and of England and the world, is the same substantially whether he has read only the altered manuscript, printed in a hundred languages, or the autograph from Franklin's own mind and pen.

We say, substantially; but in fact, the alterations

carefully considered, would, on comparison with the autograph, of themselves confirm *that* as the original characteristic truth, in all respects. The alterations prove no *alibi*, but the perpetual presence and witness of the original writer, to the end.

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### III.

#### ALTERATIONS AND OMISSIONS IN THE FIRST PRINTED COPY—THE QUESTION OF GENUINENESS.

Now these things are instructive and encouraging to the sincere and impartial searcher after truth. They may be of profound interest and importance to the student of sacred criticism and history, in the examination of the narratives of the four gospels, as well as of the epistles, and also of the books of prophecy and history in the Old Testament. The general evidence of individual character, genius, and style is always powerful, and worthy of great reliance and use in the examination and judgment of particular questions, affirmations, or denials as to parts or the whole of works attacked as doubtful.

Put the autobiography of a man like Paul in the same category with that of such a man as Franklin, and then suppose as many or more manuscripts or

copies, and the one from which the greater part of mankind have received their information and impressions, to have been an altered, unreliable copy, the true text meddled with, a false text in some places supplied, and all this running on for several generations, and then unexpectedly the true, genuine, unblotched original manuscript discovered. There would be no more variation in men's opinions of Paul, or conceptions of his character, or doubts of the reality of the events with which his life was connected, or the personages and *their* character, with whom he was conversant and coworking, and in whom he believed;—no more variation or doubt in consequence of the variations of the manuscripts, than now in men's impressions of Franklin or of the events of which he and his doings and opinions were so great a part, or of the men in whom Franklin had confidence.

Put all the apochryphal manuscripts and tales together, and all the proved variations and alleged discrepancies, in gospels or epistles, and weigh them against the demonstrations from Paul himself, and those drawn from the coincidences between his life and opinions and the gospel history and teachings, and it is wonderful how exact, full, and overwhelming the correspondence of undeniable truths and authenticities; so that the whole impression of our faith



would not be clearer or more confident, if there had been in existence neither varying, nor altered, nor apochryphal manuscripts.

But the most remarkable of all the differences between the original autograph of Franklin and the copies, and the printed editions brought to our knowledge by Mr. Bigelow's investigations, is that of the omission of the eight last pages of the work; not only, as Mr. Bigelow remarks, "second in value to no other eight pages of the Memoirs," but so valuable, so enlightening, at the same moment, as to the history of the colonial and proprietary laws and methods of government, and of Franklin's own courageous, disinterested, sagacious and generous instrumentality in behalf of the Province of Pennsylvania; his arguments and influence with Lord Granville, President of the Council, and Lord Mansfield; and his defence of the assembly against the oppressive legislation of the proprietaries; a defence completed and assured by himself giving bonds for the assembly, and securing the credit of the province, at a very critical period and emergency, *as no other person in England or America could have done.* All this in the same brief, artless, attractive style, which throughout the Memoirs is so delightful, making law questions themselves almost as pleasant and plain as personal characters, and producing an effect as of one lying

on his oars in a birch canoe on the St. Lawrence in a calm at sunset, and watching the changes of the lovely scenery, gliding by.

These eight pages, together with the portion of Franklin's own outline of the topics yet to have been treated, and events recorded, from 1757 to 1790, make one realize sadly what a loss to the best part of our literature and history it was, when Franklin was compelled by illness at length to relinquish all hope of completing his work. From the words "*sent to England*," we are carried onward through the successive key-notes and signals of whole provinces of interesting and important events, stenographic ciphers or mementoes to be filled out of the thirty years yet remaining of his active life.

The scenes of his various residences in England and France, of Germany also, his notices of men and manners, and of his own scientific studies, are recorded in such phrases as these, of "The Lightning Kite—Various Discoveries—My Manner of prosecuting that Study—Stamp Act—My Opposition to it—Examination in Parliament—Reputation it gave me—Stoves and Chimney-plates—Armonica—My Character—*Costs me nothing to be civil to Inferiors; a good deal to be submissive to Superiors—Abuse before the Privy Council—Return to America—Congress—Committee of Safety—Sent to Boston, to the Camp, to*

Canada, to Lord Howe, to France;" all these bright glimpses of the chapters of a varied, rich, and most romantic epic of adventure, history, discovery, personal command and creation, reposing unwritten in his mind; bright and distinct realities of providence, character, and genius, through the period of a whole generation, the most profoundly interesting and important in many respects, of the whole history of England, America, and France;—all these syllabuses written out, had he been permitted; what a priceless inheritance to have left in English literature! The absence of it is indeed in some degree made up by the preservation of Franklin's inestimably precious letters, so far as they cover the details of this period; but the loss of it is greater than that of any similar effort of genius ever undertaken but not completed, by any writer of the English tongue.

There is no question, nor any possibility of it, as to these eight pages having belonged to Franklin's original autograph, and having been written by him.

But now suppose all this had been the history of a manuscript before the discovery of the art of printing; suppose in the second or third century this manuscript first found. Suppose all the other manuscripts of the same work to have been believed older than this, there being no record or knowledge of the manner in which any of them came

into existence, only that they were known to have been in use, and many copies of them in circulation. And suppose that in all those copies the last eight pages found in the newly-discovered MS. were wanting. In such a case the critical decision would be *against the genuineness of those eight pages*. They would have been set down as the work of some ingenious forger, and no argument could have prevailed against the evidence of hundreds of supposed earlier manuscripts. The proofs of the authenticity and genuineness of the real autograph having perished, the evidence of style, thought, and historic congruity would go for nothing.

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#### IV.

#### SIMILAR POSSIBLE PREDICAMENTS OF THE GOSPEL MANUSCRIPTS.

In these respects the instances of Dr. Franklin's autobiography, and that of Mark's gospel present a most suggestive and illustrative similarity. That which we know to have occurred in the year 1789, may have occurred in the year 59, as well. A man with his hands full of business, and his life with cares and interruptions, might be severed for weeks

or months from the intended continuation of the history of his times; and the record, so far as completed, might be copied and recopied, and the copies circulated, before the work was resumed or could be finished; and so the unfinished copies might remain, without being completed, even after the work was concluded by the author. In this case, the unfinished copies would be the earliest in time, and might have had access and authority, where the perfected work did not come. But the fact of their not containing the author's conclusion could not be accepted for testimony that he never wrote a conclusion, or that the additions made by him in a later writing were not his.

Not one of the many copies first known of Franklin's Memoirs contained the eight additional pages found in the discovered original! How came they to be omitted, when those copies were published? Are those copies trustworthy at all? So far as to what they contain, they are; but *not as to what they omit*. They are not capable of testimony in regard to the passages wanting in them. Why so? Because the author of those copies added the eight pages found in his own Autograph Memoir, in his own handwriting, *after all the other copies had been made*, from which the work was printed. This is known beyond dispute.

But suppose there were nothing but manuscript copies in existence, and no proof of the offered autograph copy having been the original. And suppose a recension of manuscripts ordered or undertaken for an authorized edition. Then certainly the majority of manuscripts, and those known to have been the earliest extant, being found without the eight pages discovered in the latest, these eight pages would be pronounced spurious, and not to be admitted.

Now it is as plain in Mark's case as in Dr. Franklin's, that the author of the first gospel manuscript referred to or known as Mark's, may have dismissed from his hand a copy or copies of his own work up to the 9th verse of the last chapter, closing with the abrupt words, *They were afraid*; having been in some possible way, for a season, as suggested by Hug, interrupted there, and the copyist left with that imperfect record. And from any one of such unfinished copies others may have proceeded.

But not one of them could give any possible testimony that Mark did not himself afterwards complete his own work, or that such completion was not to be found in his own continued autograph.

That autograph, or a full copy from it, must have been known to Irenæus; for all our manuscripts that omit the closing passage are of much later date than his era. He consequently remains a competent wit-

ness of what was known to exist as Mark's gospel in the second century, while they are incompetent witnesses as to the passage which they omit having never been written by Mark. Though there were a thousand of them, they could not testify that Mark left his gospel unfinished. A single manuscript or version of the preceding century, takes precedence of a thousand in the centuries following.

Now, as to the manuscripts of the New Testament, it is well known that there is not a single Apostolic Autograph of any gospel or epistle, or part of any, in existence; nor is there any probability that any such treasure will be discovered no more than that the lost tables of stone in the ark of the Covenant will be discovered, or those broken in pieces by Moses, though written with the finger of God. The hiding of these memorials is like the concealment of the body and burial-place of Moses himself; a preservation of the people from becoming idolaters. The people that at the foot of Sinai could break the commandments of God, and dance to Baal's music, when God's thunders had hardly ceased reverberating, would afterwards have kept, as objects of idolatrous worship, the granite folios, on which the statutes they had violated were divinely engraven. Impressively does the reticence of the Scriptures, the silence of God, declare their divineness.

If the autograph manuscripts of any of the Evangelists had been preserved, they would have become, as the Brazen Serpent, objects of worship, not teachers of faith, but superstition. And the Papal Absolutism would have held them with the power of excommunication, ages earlier than it ruled the world without them. Consider how it kept even the Codex Vaticanus. What a priceless possession would have been one signature in Paul's handwriting! If any church of the time of Constantine, or in the Middle Ages, had held the Epistle to Philemon, *I Paul have written it with mine own hand; I will repay it;* that church and its bishops would have been the acknowledged head of the spiritual and ritual hierarchy. There's a Divinity in these arrangements of the visible objects of our faith, that more wisely shapes our ends than we can rough-hew them in our reasonings, or imagine a better way.

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## V.

### UNCERTAINTIES IN THE TRANSMISSION OF MANUSCRIPTS—INTERNAL EVIDENCE OVER ALL.

One of the earliest, most industrious, accurate, and impartial of American historians, Mr. Jared Sparks,



published in 1833 a volume of Franklin's letters and miscellaneous papers, *never before printed*, and written without the remotest thought on the part of their author that they would ever be made public. The faithful editor remarks on the little ability of Franklin's grandson, and the little justice as yet done to the subject. "It is moreover to be remembered," said he, "with extreme regret, that Franklin's *letter books*, embracing the entire period of his agency in England through almost twenty years, *were lost by negligence or treachery* of the person to whose care he entrusted them when he went to France." Franklin's own reputation suffered in the hands of some of his later associates and contemporaries. Near forty years elapsed from the publication of that volume by Mr. Sparks to the discovery and appearance of Franklin's autobiography with Mr. Bigelow's instructive investigations. Here then is the case of the circulation of printed copies of a work *for nearly a hundred years*, and yet the original copy *not examined, for verification of the printed editions*. And it was almost as long before the means of verification and correction came to the hands of a writer able, intelligent, impartial, and having command of all the accumulated sources of information for a century.

One might have supposed that the art of printing would have set modern history at a great height of

superiority above the preceding ages for security and reliableness. But we see that it may also be the means of multiplying falsehoods and reverberations of them, until it is impossible to come at the truth. It may cause the success and perpetuity of an error, that tradition and a few manuscripts alone, as the investigator's only dependence, would have prevented. The uncertainties and grounds of scepticism exist where there is not only printing in perfection, but the most unbounded issue, circulation, perusal, and comparison of copies and editions.

In the greatest enlightenment of an age of "unlicensed, that is, free and unfettered printing," we see: 1st. The uncertainty that may attend the existence and transmission of the most unquestionably authentic manuscripts the world has ever known. 2d. The difficulty of determining which, of a number of copies to be printed from, was the earliest known, and which was really the first, the original of all the others. 3d. In view of existing discovered variations, which copy is most correct, or which was copied, with the variations, from the other. And, 4th, it is plain that in the case of omission of any portion or portions, *the passage wanting in some copies may never have been in existence at all in the very first copy ever known and used for printing*, the first that was quoted or described or translated. And all

this time, while copies innumerable, and of successive editions and dates, may have been printed, multiplied, and circulated, *with that omission*, the original and true manuscript may have existed, unknown, unconsulted, *containing the omitted passage*, written out plainly, and in full, in the same handwriting as at the beginning. The whole history *magnifies the importance of internal evidence*, and illustrates the hazard of dogmatic pronouncements, *whether grounded on priority of dates, or existing variations*.

All our manuscripts of the New Testament are of a later date by centuries than the life of the apostles, eye-witnesses, and actors. Of course they are all copies. In some of them there are omissions of important passages *contained by other copies*; passages that contain as convincing evidence of belonging to the original autograph, if that manuscript could suddenly be produced, as the eight pages of Franklin's manuscript omitted in all the printed copies of his work for near a hundred years. Even if those passages were found in only one or two of the manuscripts, this would go much further to prove that they were copied from some earlier and more authentic manuscript, than that they were forged. There is no adequate reason for the forgery. At any rate, the internal evidence from the passages themselves, taken in connection

with the fact that the manuscripts in which they are found are as authoritative as any in which they are not found, is sufficient to remove objections.

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## VI.

### LESSONS FROM FRANKLIN'S AUTOGRAPHY AS TO THE CLOSE OF MARK'S GOSPEL.

A suggestive and instructive light may be thrown from this omitted passage at the close of the autograph in Franklin's Memoirs not only upon the vexed questions concerning the close of Mark's gospel, but also the opening of the eighth chapter of John's. The questionable passage in Mark, the disputed passage, includes the twelve closing verses of his gospel. Without these verses the gospel is incomplete, and ends so abruptly, that beyond question it could not so have been left by its author. Yet it was wanting in the majority of the Greek manuscripts as late as the era of Jerome, A. D. 370, though found *in many of equal authority*. But the fact is quite decisive of its early existence, that Irenæus, the disciple of Polycarp, and bishop of Lyons, A. D. 177, refers to it absolutely as a part of Mark's gospel, and quotes from it the nineteenth verse, with the words,

*In fine autem, Evangelii, ait Marcus, but in the end of the gospel Mark saith.* This testimony is conclusive as to the fact that *in the earliest known period* a manuscript of such weight as to be quoted as authority *had this whole chapter*, and there is no evidence whatever of any manuscript being then in existence without it.

This testimony is presented by Lardner from Irenæus as follows: "Wherefore also Mark, the interpreter and follower of Peter, makes this the beginning of his evangelic writing; the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God. And in the end of the gospel Mark says, So then the Lord Jesus, after He had spoken to them, was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God."

This is very convincing: 1st. As giving no intimation of there being any other MS. of Mark's gospel then in existence without the whole of what stands as the closing chapter. 2d. As making it quite certain that Irenæus himself knew not of *any supposition* of any part of that chapter ever having been wanting. 3d. That no one in that age had discovered or imagined any mark of difference in style or language between the last twelve verses, and the previous fifteen chapters. 4th. That Irenæus himself was as sure of the end being Mark's as he was of the beginning.

Such a thing as families of manuscripts were not then known, nor is there for a long time any indication of any MS. of Mark different in any respect from that in possession of Irenæus, or of any church in his age. The Peshito-Syriac version has the passage; and against these two authorities no successive accumulation of witnesses can prevail. The passage stands, and none other than Mark appears as its author.

Gregory of Nyssa, in Cappadocia, A. D. 370, says, in his second Homily on the Resurrection, "that in the most exact copies, St. Mark's gospel concluded with these words (ch. xvi. 8), 'For they were afraid.' But in some copies it was added, verse nine, 'Now when Jesus was risen early, the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene'; and the verses following. He proceeds to reconcile these verses with the somewhat differing accounts in Matthew, Luke, and John. Mill says, that this Father is the first who has taken any notice of this various reading at the end of Mark's gospel." (See Lardner on Gregory Nyssen, Works, vol. 4, pp. 295, 298.)

Compare also the remarks of Hug (section 75, of his Introduction to the New Testament), on the ending of Mark's gospel. Jerome says that in some Greek MSS. "there occurred an important various reading after the fourteenth verse, showing that *there*

were not wanting numerous MSS. which contained the disputed portion." And Jerome affirms that because the passage contained some things not easily to be reconciled with the other gospels, therefore it was rejected. "But the preposterous nature," says Hug, "of such a termination of Mark, at the eighth verse, was perceived even by the Greeks who did not receive the added verses." He proceeds to quote the opinion of Griesbach, that it is incredible that Mark could have so abruptly finished his gospel; in fact left it unfinished. "How could the conclusion of the book disappear, and the circumstance be unnoticed? It must have attracted attention. If it happened before copies had been taken, Mark might easily have remedied it, and was bound to do so; if it occurred after copies were taken, the genuine conclusion must at least have been preserved in some manuscripts, and must it not be the one which we now have?"—Hug's Int., 75, p. 479.

If any one desires to know the impression which must have been made by an unfinished copy of this gospel, closing with the recorded terror of the disciples, he has only to open the Book of the New Covenant, by Granville Penn, in 1836, "being a critical revision of the text and translation of the English Version of the New Testament, with the aid of the most ancient manuscripts, unknown to

the age in which that version was last put forth by authority.”

This book was followed by a valuable volume of annotations, learned, critical, and suggestive, in support of the author's own emendations and opinions. His corrections are not always improvements, sometimes far otherwise; and what he says of the labors of the learned Scholz for an established true text, may as well be applied to himself, namely, that “his readers are convinced that some of his decisions have been *altogether erroneous*; for he can not impart to them that *incommunicable momentum,—the hypothesis's passion for his own hypothesis.*”

Scholz's edition of the gospels in 1830 was the latest work to which Penn could refer. Tischendorf's discoveries had not then been made, nor those researches, that for the last forty years, with such prodigious industry and erudition, have been pursued by the army of textual critics working in the same field. And so, Penn supposed that “Scholz's active and laborious gleanings prove that we had already gathered in all the grain that has come down to us from Christian Antiquity, and that nothing now remains in the field but the stubble of the harvest.”

But in Scholz's opinion the last chapter of Mark's gospel was *a part of that golden grain*, never to be driven away as chaff, or burned as stubble. An abso-



lute settlement of the text is possible, putting it beyond the reach of conjectural flailmen, with their new threshing instruments, I have dreamed, I have dreamed. "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord." Jer. xxiii. 28, 29. "He will not *always* be threshing it, for his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him." Is. xxviii. 26, 28. The threshing, and all other processes, are only for the purpose of securing genuine "seed for the sower and bread for the eater" unto all generations.

Dr. Johnson, in the account of his "Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland," makes this pithy remark. "If we know little of the ancient Highlanders, let us not fill the *vacuity* with *Ossian*. If we have not searched the Magellanic regions, let us forbear to people them with Patagons. To be ignorant is painful; but it is dangerous to quiet our uneasiness, by the delusive opiate of hasty persuasion."

The men did *diligently* observe, and did *hastily* catch it; so did Ahab, and received sentence accordingly. The thoughts of every one that is hasty tend only to want. The sacred proverbs are good for consultation in the matter of manuscripts, as in every other business. That which was rejected by some

as stubble may be found by others full of divine seed.

From the second century downwards we know that the conclusion of this gospel existed as Mark's. It could not have been admitted as such, in Mark's lifetime, without Mark's authorship, as a supplement to what he had left unfinished. And after his death, what forger could have added it in his name, without discovery, even if possessed of the ability of composing so artful and probable a completion of the narrative? The authority of an inspiration the same as Mark's would have to be assumed and sustained by the writer.

And meantime there is no testimony, in manuscript or version or Father of that date, that it was *not* a conclusion originally written by Mark. It is impossible to understand what some critics can mean in saying that its transmission has been accompanied by a continuous testimony that it was not a part of Mark's original writing. There is no such testimony transmitted or known; but on the contrary the words of Irenæus are an undisputed record, the earliest in existence in regard to Mark's gospel, that it *was received* as Mark's and none other's, even to the end.

Some manuscripts afterwards omitting it, and copied from age to age, are not "a continuous testimony" that it was *not* Mark's *originally*, but only

that, from whomsoever it originated, it was omitted in some copies, no one can tell when.

A manuscript in possession of Irenæus, containing the section omitted at a later period after his time in other manuscripts, would be equivalent to the production of the autograph of Franklin in possession of M. le Veillard. The only difficulty is how to account for the passage being left out at all in any manuscripts of later date, while it was certainly retained in a succession of the more perfect and authoritative copies downwards through the centuries. Dean Alford supposes that the lost leaf of the original gospel *as Mark wrote it*, was torn away, and then the passage was replaced, as a completion of the gospel, *soon after the apostolic period*. But who excepting Mark himself could have replaced it, if it was absolutely lost? And that it was *not* lost at the time of Irenæus's reference to it is proved by his quotation from it, *as a then known part of Mark's gospel*. As to internal evidence against it, there is not any that will stand consideration; one might as easily contrive an argument against Franklin's eight last pages on the ground of there being in them a greater proportion of large words and fewer idiomatic expressions than belonged to Franklin's style; or, because the words *flimsy*, *naughty*, *beckoning*, and *viva voce*, occur, and *pocket-instructions*. Or because

the single word *flimsy*, found in these eight pages, occurs nowhere else in the autobiography.

There is internal evidence in its favor, besides the necessity of the case; the impossibility of a memoir so terse, pithy, and entire as this, having ever been committed to a church, or as we say, given to the public, without a conclusion; and as it were in the midst of a sentence, in the flight, amazement, and fear of the two Marys and Salome running from the sepulchre. It is not essential for us to know by what accident or wilfulness or carelessness the missing verses may have disappeared, may not have been added to some particular copy; and then that defective copy may itself have been copied. It is enough, if afterwards the whole manuscript is found, and has been quoted as the gospel of Mark, and a text given from the missing verses as of the same authority with the whole. It is like the case of a river disappearing and running under-ground. It is not necessary for you to make the under-ground passage in order to prove that it is the same river. You may analyze the water; you may catch the fish; you may dredge the bottom; and because you do not know the convulsion by which nor the time when the river disappeared you are not on that account compelled to deny or doubt its personal identity.

## VII.

LESSONS AS TO JOHN viii. 1-12—THE CONJECTURES  
OF CRITICS.

The same may be said of the other questioned passage in John's gospel, the opening of the eighth chapter, the wonderful, inestimably precious account of Christ's judgment of the accusers of the woman taken in adultery. If the painting of the Transfiguration by Raphael were brought in question as to its author, it would be as possible for critics to deny the marks of his genius in it, and to prove that it must have been the work of some other painter, as for a critic of the New Testament to prove that the narrative of the woman was not written by the apostle John, but in another style and in different language from his. Yet as much as this has been asserted of the passage. It has even been conjectured, by way of accounting for its absence from some manuscripts, as well as its appearance in the received text, that the evangelist John may have incorporated a portion of the *current oral tradition into his narrative*, and that this portion may have been afterwards *variously corrected from another gospel*, and that, *being seen in early times to be ALIEN*

from John's dictum, it may have been inserted at the end of Luke xxi.

Here the critic, who is none less than Dean Alford, affirms the *entire diversity* from the style of narrative of our evangelist, and yet supposes him to *have adopted a portion* of the current oral tradition *into his narrative*. But the question comes up, from whom did he receive that tradition, and on what evidence, *and whose style and language except his own could he be supposed to have adopted in writing out the incident?* Or can it be imagined that John composed his gospel from traditionary accounts, concerning Christ, instead of relating what he himself knew as an eye-witness, or received by divine inspiration? If inserted at the end of Luke xxi., why is it not there still? How could the removal from Luke and the insertion in John have been accomplished, consistently with the integrity of either gospel as then known?

Even if he took a running tradition, of which he is thus supposed to have known nothing when he wrote the first copy of his own narrative, must he not inevitably have put the tradition into his own habitual form and manner of composition? If it was a *fragment of writing*, and *not a tradition*, that he *copied out*, and *inserted* into his own gospel, then that supposes the pre-existence of another narra-

tive, containing important notices of our Lord's life, with which John had never before been made acquainted, nor any one of the evangelists, who are supposed to have written earlier than himself. And yet John says, concerning his own gospel, "Many other signs truly did Jesus, in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that, believing, ye might have life through His name." The argument here seems manifestly to be that nothing was written by the disciples of Jesus, from tradition merely, nothing but what was done by Him in their presence, so that they should be *eye-witnesses*, as well as recorders of what they had seen and known. There were many other things, John said, that were never written, but these *were written*, as essential grounds for a confident belief in Christ. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of Life; that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things *write* we unto you, that your joy may be full."—I John i. 1-4. The empha-

sis is marked, and repeated in all John's compositions. "This is the record. These things have *I written*, that ye may know."

It stands there as John's. This is the declaration to all who find it in the book. Now on a verdict being demanded by the judge he always puts the doubt to the favor of the accused, not against him. Sceptics and rationalists, in dealing with the Scriptures adopt the reverse of this as the rule of their criticism. Charity and mercy being turned out of court, doubt itself is assumed as evidence, and reasoning from conjecture is resorted to in accounting for the manner in which the accused passage got into its authoritative place.

It stands there as John's. The verdict of cumulative belief through many ages, on some good evidence, has set it there. It commends itself to the heart, the conscience, the reason, as a self-evidencing and exquisite reality in the life and example of Jesus. Had it been proposed to the wit, intelligence, and charity of the whole world to continue twelve verses containing internal evidence sufficient to carry the heart and mind of all Christendom, and all generous judges, as certainly divine, nothing could have been offered to compare with this. It could never have been written so early as its first appearance, by any uninspired man. There is no



motive for it, considered as a forgery. The witnesses for it are many and unimpeached. Only its absence from many manuscripts gives opportunity for conjecture that it may possibly not have been of John's own writing.

Who now shall venture, or by what arguments or evidence, to exclude this passage, thus anathematizing it as a forgery? But it must be either that, or divine. If divine, it comes under the protecting sweep of the clause at the end of the New Testament Scriptures, as well as the forewarning clause in the Pentateuch. Add not, diminish not, for the Word is God's.

If permitted to stand, it must be without a mark of suspicion upon it. Any such indication would be like sending an inmate of Sing Sing into society, with his prison suit upon him. Let every man beware of this supposed convict. It would thus be an insult upon common sense and reverence to put any passage retained in the Scriptures in brackets. It would go far to admit that we can not be sure in regard to any part of Scripture, but that every man must and may receive it on man's authority, not God's. It is not a question of a possible various reading, which may be set in the margin without accusation of the text. But it creates suspicion, and admits within the text the presence

of the detective, as if for the protection of every Christian reader.

It must stand fair, if at all, in any received version. Not that there is no farther appeal, or possible re-hearing of the case, on new discovered evidence. But until such come to light, the character of the witness is good. Who can bring any thing against it? Who can imagine any thing? Who can bring any proof of such early tamperings with a completed copy of any one of the original gospels? Who can give any reason for such an attempted interpolation? Or any other example of the introduction of a paragraph affirmed to be so unconnected with the tenor of the narrative, and requiring an omniscient inspiration for its continuance?

It has been interrupted with the brief note that every man of Christ's hearers of the preceding discussion went unto his own house, and Jesus unto the Mount of Olives. Then, in the freshness of the morning light, He is again in the temple, teaching the people.

At what point and how shall He renew with them the reasoning of the preceding evening, so full of interest and importance as to His claims as the Messiah, the King of Israel and Saviour of the world, the Interpreter of the written Law of God, but not now the Accuser, nor the final Judge of men by that law,

but their Advocate and Intercessor before God, the Searcher of all hearts and consciences.

What providence brought the woman and her accusers into His presence? And what uninspired mind could possibly have foreseen the course of the investigation, or the wisdom and mercy of the Lord Jesus conducting it, and bringing out in so graphic a distinctness the characters and passions of the rulers and the people, and His own authority as the light of the world; so that whosoever followed Him should not walk in darkness, but should have the light of life. The characteristic event, and the use the Lord Jesus made of it, could never have been forged; much less inserted in the narrative by any but an eye-witness, and a sympathizer with the heart, and a reader of the mind of Christ. Who would presume to stand in John's place, for such record, in John's life-time?

Supposing it to have been an interpolation, who could have dared to insert it in an apostolic manuscript? And if it was not originally found in the text, why should this place of all others have been selected for its insertion?

For Alford affirms an "entire unconnection" with the context, and "*entire diversity*" from John's style; and yet afterward shows us "a way out of the enigma," that is, that *John himself* may have incorporated this disconnected and entirely diverse portion into *his*

narrative, in this very place; from which it was afterwards, by some unknown detective of its alien style, removed, and set in a better supposed connection and chronology in the synoptic narrative, at the end of Luke xxi.

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### VIII.

#### ALFORD AND LIGHTFOOT—EUSEBIUS AND LARDNER—PROPOSED TREATMENT BY BRACKETS.

Prof. Lightfoot, in his *Essay on a fresh Revision of the New Testament*, “ventures a conjecture,” going in some respects beyond Dean Alford’s, and supposing that both the close of the gospel of Mark, and the opening section of the eighth chapter of John, “were due to that knot of early disciples who gathered about John in Asia Minor, and must have preserved more than one true tradition of the Lord’s life, and of the earliest days of the Church, of which some at least had been themselves eye-witnesses.”

We ask inevitably whether these suppositions do not tax our credulity beyond what is reasonable; conjecturing the presence of disciples gathered around John, at a period after all the gospels are supposed to have been written, possessing traditions of our

Lord's sayings, and life, true, and important enough to have been inserted in the sacred books, but not found there; and John and Mark being informed of them for the purpose of such insertion, and on the ground of this new information, putting those traditions into their own writings?

Yet this is the hypothesis of Alford, namely, "that the Evangelist may have incorporated a portion of the current oral tradition into his narrative." If this is also the meaning of Prof. Lightfoot, there are some questions, and contradictions in the proposed hypotheses, more impossible of solution than any difficulties encountered in the gospel narratives.

For we are commended to traditions as being true, in possession of imagined early disciples, concerning whom there is no evidence of any of them having been eye-witnesses—"oral traditions," as supposed by Alford, adopted by the Evangelist, "and afterwards corrected from the gospel of the Hebrews (unknown what it was), or other traditional sources." And Prof. Lightfoot refers to one of these traditions as being that of Papias, a disciple of this school that gathered about St. John, and as being "THE ACCOUNT of the woman taken in adultery, KNOWN to have been related by Papias."

Now the whole of what is related by Papias is given by Eusebius as follows: "He relates also another

story, of a woman accused of many crimes before the Lord, which is contained in the gospel according to the Hebrews."—Lardner on Papias, giving the chapter in full from Eusebius, Vol. 2, pp. 119, 124. See also Tregelles on the Printed Text of the New Testament, 242.

This is absolutely all the foundation there is for affirming this story to have been that in John's gospel, or for believing that it ever came from any knot of early disciples gathered around John. Even supposing that it did, and was really the tradition concerning this woman: what then follows?

Those early disciples, if eye-witnesses, must have lived longer than John himself, if their traditions were put into his gospel after his death, at their suggestion. If put into his gospel by himself from traditions delivered by them to him, what are we to think of John's own testimony (John xxi. 30, 31), that he himself knew of "many other signs done by Jesus, in the presence of the disciples, which are *not written* in this book; but these *are* written, that ye may believe," etc. And in I John i. 1-4: "That which we have heard, and seen with our eyes;" *our own*, and not another's. And so, II Peter i. 16: "Eye-witnesses of His majesty, and not following cunningly devised fables." Is there anywhere so much as an intimation of any things in any of the gospels hav-

ing been delivered at second-hand; or put in writing at the mouth of any but those "who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word?" Luke i. 2, ἀπ' ἀρχῆς αὐτόπται καὶ ὑπηρέται τοῦ λόγου.

Not a hint can be found in the New Testament of the inspired writers receiving their materials from tradition, but many cautions against it, "lest any man spoil you after the tradition of men."—Col. ii. 8. But in the present case of the supposed knot of disciples, did John receive the tradition from them, or they from him? Did he put it in his gospel, in their language, or in his own? If John wrote it, in whatever style, it was an integral portion of his original gospel. Yet Prof. Lightfoot says that evidence external and internal is against its being so regarded, though whencesoever it comes it seems to bear on its face the highest credentials of authentic history.

But how can that be *authentic*, which under pretence of inspiration, is not inspired? Or which being judged in early times to be *alien from John's style* was afterwards *variously corrected* and put in another situation? Would any of the apostles have presumed thus to tamper with each other's productions? Or were the critics of the apostolic period such profound judges of the shades of original diction? Or did the running publishers of those days take liberties with the original autographs entrusted

to their care, such as the grandson of Franklin is proved to have taken, in altering the autobiography of his illustrious ancestor?

To many minds the evidence both external and internal protects both Mark and John from such conjectures. The passage in John is found in more than three hundred cursive manuscripts. Under Jerome's knowledge, it was in many codices, both Greek and Latin. It is eminently Christ-like, as Prof. Schaff most truly remarks, and full of comfort to penitent outcasts. It also presents truly the conduct of the scribes and Pharisees in trying Jesus with ensnaring questions, but breathes the Saviour's spirit of holy mercy, which condemns the sin and saves the sinner. The internal evidence therefore, and the moral, as well as a good amount of positive critical evidence, is in its favor. So far from there being any authority for having it bracketed or omitted as spurious or doubtful, such a treatment of the text on the part of any committee of modern scholars would be an intrusion on the rights of Christendom. Any man or church or company of revisers that shall attempt to strike out from the English Bible the closing verses of the last chapter of Mark, or the first eleven verses of the eighth chapter of John, may be sure to encounter an intelligent and conscientious opposition.



IX.

CONNECTION AND CONGRUITY—INTERNAL EVIDENCE  
OF INTEGRITY, AND IMPROBABILITIES  
OF FORGERY.

The most unlearned English reader may judge of the argument from the context, as competently and fairly as the profoundest scholar. The indications are sometimes far to seek, and the trains of thought may seem dissevered; but not in the instance before us.

An absolute disconnection has been affirmed. But there is a solemn *nemesis* of connection and congruity between this narrative by John (so superhuman in its place and power), and the preceding seventh chapter, that ought carefully to be traced, and is worthy of profound reflection.

There had been an earnest, feverish, angry discussion among the common people, the *πολλοὶ ἐκ τοῦ ὄχλου*, and the accusers of Christ, the Pharisees, the officers of the high priest, sent to take Him, and the rulers of the nation. Nicodemus among them had confronted them with their own law, forbidding adverse judgment of any one, without first trying him by the required witnesses, and knowing what he had

done, by the evidence. So the controversy was left, over night.

In the morning these exasperated and disappointed enemies came again to the Temple, where Christ had already renewed His teachings, bringing a case to Him for His own judgment, by which they were sure to find occasion for arraigning Him, as against Moses or against Cesar, or both. And if He accepted and exercised the office of judge, asserting an authority above that of Moses, as He had done in regard to the Sabbath for all mankind, they would have charged Him with blasphemy, and might have enraged the people against Him. The Law of Moses not only required two or three witnesses, but also directed (Comp. Deut. xix. 15, and xvii. 6, 7) that in case of a crime worthy to be punished by death, "the hands of the witnesses should be first upon him, to put him to death, and afterward the hands of the people."

Jesus, stooping down, wrote with His finger, and then rising, said, "He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone."

It was the Searcher of hearts, calling each accuser as if by name, to the duty of an accuser. Not one could utter a syllable. They had brought the woman to Jesus for judgment, not from abhorrence of the sin, or to stone *her*, but out of hatred and accusation of Christ, in the hope of entrapping *Him*. He indicted

*them* before God, the Law, and their own conscience. They could not cast even at *her* not so much as the stone of a word, but stole away, speechless, bowed down with shame, smitten to the heart, while Jesus, again stooping down, wrote on the ground.

They had been glib enough in pressing their questions, confident of triumph, and had insultingly continued asking Him, even while He was writing. If any one desires an instructive light of illustration on the possible significance of this action of our Lord, let him read the annotations by Lightfoot, Hebrew and Talmudical, on the eighth verse of this chapter. Works, Vol. 12, pp. 315-317.

“Woman, where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee?” proved thy guilt by his testimony, given according to the law? “She said, No man, Lord. Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee. Go, and sin no more.” The heart-searching tenderness of Christ was the salvation of the sinner, whom the malignity and hypocrisy of the Jews had brought to be destroyed.

How striking the resemblance between these words of our Lord and those addressed to the impotent man whom He had healed at the pool of Bethesda! “Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.” He makes manifest the counsels of the hearts, and brings to light the hidden

things of darkness, at a word. *Now*, this word is to save the soul; by and by, it will judge all men. *Now*, it came not to *judge* the world, but to *save* the world. Both the impotent man and the guilty woman were saved by the Lord's Word *now*, that they might not be condemned by it hereafter. Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come.

Now again Jesus resumes the argument of light, life, and divine authority in Himself, in immediate connection with the preceding events and discussions, and in the presence of His own adversaries and accusers. And their points against Him are again in regard to the required witnesses, and judgment to be rendered accordingly, which must be rendered on evidence, and personal knowledge, and not hearsay, nor after the flesh.

They *accused Him* of self-assertion without testimony, and, so of falsehood. But they had themselves accused the woman, and demanded judgment, *without witnesses*; being themselves paralyzed and driven out of court, speechless, by conscience, at the words of Christ. Now Christ says, I judge no man thus. But my judgment is true according to your own law, with which Nicodemus has already answered you, when you were accusing me. I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. Here are the two required witnesses. It is written in your Law, that the testi-

mony of two men is true. Here are two, and one of them is God that sent me, and is with me. Take this testimony, and act upon it. Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

From the thirty-seventh verse of the seventh chapter to the thirtieth of the eighth, and even through the eighth, there is one and the same flashing of divine light and argument, not interrupted, but rather, occasion given for most wonderful and providential illustration and confirmation, by the malicious, and (as they thought) adroit stratagem of the *κατηγοροί*, the *accusers* of the woman and of Christ.—See the comment of Lightfoot on the ninth verse.

It is worthy of note that Lightfoot, in considering why the story of the woman taken in adultery was *not* in *some* ancient copies, quotes from Eusebius “two little stories”; first, the passage in regard to Papias, and second the order from Constantine for fifty copies of the Scriptures to be written out in fair parchment for reading in the churches.

Tischendorf regarded the Sinaitic MS. discovered by him as perhaps one of those very copies.

Lightfoot says, “If Eusebius ascribed the story of the adulterers to the trifler Papias, or at least to the gospel according to the Hebrews only, *without doubt he would never insert it in copies transcribed by him.*”

Hence possibly might arise the *omission* of it in some copies, *after Eusebius's time*. It is in copies *before his age, etc.*"—Works, 12, 313.

This suggestion is no mere conjecture, but an acute inference from comparison of the two passages in Eusebius. It strengthens the argument for the genuineness of the disputed text.

Bengel, in his *Gnomon* remarks on the clause, "*and saw none but the woman,*" that "the preposition *πλήν*, but, nowhere employed by John, betrays a gloss unknown to the ancients; the force of which preposition John has everywhere expressed differently."

This suggestion, in order to stand firm, would require at least three suppositions or assumptions, namely: (1) that we know absolutely that John himself did not write this paragraph, for if he did, he wrote every word of it; (2) that the word *πλήν* had no other force in Greek usage known to John than such as might have been expressed by the other synonymous prepositions, adverbs, or conjunctive particles, which John has employed; (3) that if anywhere John has used a word that can be found nowhere else in his gospel, this would be proof that the passage where that word is found was not his own, but a gloss.

Bengel says of John, "*everywhere* expressed differently."

But now, turning to the Apocalypse, chapter ii. 25,

we find this very word *παῶν*, as an adverb, though Bengel has said that it is *nowhere* employed by John. The use of it in the Apocalypse can hardly have been overlooked by the critic; and yet the same reasoning concerning its use in the gospel, applied to the instance of it in the Apocalypse, *would betray a gloss there likewise*, and would consequently mark the verse, if not the context, as not being John's writing.

Mark has used the same preposition only once in his gospel (Mark xii. 32; there is none other *but* Him, besides Him). The argument by which the verse in John is supposed to indicate a gloss, would prove with equal force that the verses 28-34 in the twelfth chapter of Mark are not Mark's own writing, but the work of the glossarian.

For the argument is the same in both cases. John is said never to have used *παῶν* anywhere else; therefore he could not have used it here; therefore this passage may not have been John's. On such reasoning, might not every book of the Scriptures in turn be excluded as possibly a forgery?

Perhaps the word, as found in John viii. 10, should more accurately be rendered *notwithstanding*, as it frequently *is* rendered in other places by our translators.

For example, Luke x. 20, "Notwithstanding (*παῶν*), in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto

you; but rather (*ὁὐ μάλλον*), rejoice," etc. So, x. 11, *notwithstanding*, be ye sure, etc. In Luke xiii. 33, and xviii. 8, it is translated *nevertheless*, and so in xviii. 42. In Acts viii. 1, it is translated *except*; xv. 28, no greater burden *than*; xx. 23, *save that*; in I Corinthians xi. 11, *nevertheless*; in Eph. v. 23, *nevertheless*; in Philip. i. 18, *notwithstanding*; iii. 16, *nevertheless*; iv. 14, *notwithstanding*. In Matt. xxvi. 64, *nevertheless*, and 39.

Now let us read in John viii. 10, "When Jesus had lifted up Himself, and saw none, *notwithstanding* the woman" (that is, although she was still there, while her accusers had fled, leaving Jesus alone, and the woman standing in the midst), "He said unto her," etc. The connection and reasoning gain force and point by rendering, as in the passages indicated in Luke and Ephesians, *notwithstanding*.

There is no occasion for supposing a gloss, but rather confirmation of the whole passage. Bengel himself admitted the supposition of the gloss, only in the three words, *notwithstanding the woman*, and believed that the whole questioned passage, in its integrity, belonged to John, and was the gift and inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

And he says, "The wisdom and power evinced by Jesus<sup>t</sup> in the history of the adulterers are so great, that it is strange that this remarkable portion of the



gospel history should at present be regarded by many as uncertain."

The internal evidence overpowered, in Bengel's judgment, the external doubts.

Of all known causes of the differences to be found in our stores of Scripture Manuscripts, none are sufficient to account for, or to prove, large interpolations. If such could be successfully installed as forgeries, and no means left of proving them, it would be contrary to the divine promises and seals of an infallible inspiration.

Serivener enumerates twenty possible causes of variations in the manuscripts, the last being, "*doctrinal preconceptions.*" But a fair example of the harmlessness of the greater part of the variations may be taken from the difference in the order of the same words, before or after, as for example, *by name Ananias*, or *Ananias by name*.—Acts ix. 12.

The scribes writing from dictation, not from the copy before them, might account for many verbal differences, especially in the case of several copying, from one's reading aloud.

Dr. Vaughan presents Paul's *habit of dictating*, as "sufficient reason for broken constructions, for particles without verbs, for suspended nominatives, for sudden digressions, for fresh starts."

"The more copious our stores of the New Testa-

ment manuscripts the less our perplexity and doubt as to the purity of the sacred text. We can arrive at *almost miraculous certainty* of its integrity."

"One great truth is at length admitted on all hands, namely, the almost complete freedom of Holy Scripture from the suspicion of *wilful corruption*: the absolute identity of the testimony of every known copy in respect to doctrine, spirit, and the main drift of every argument and every narrative through the entire volume of Inspiration."

All these facts and reasonings apply with power to the cases of supposed interpolations in Mark and John. They show the extreme improbability, after such "almost miraculous certainty," of the sacred text, knowing the marvellous providential preservation of such multitudes of manuscripts from corruption, that such massive forgeries of whole narratives should have found a settlement in two of the gospels, in the middle of one, at the end of the other! Were it possible for revisers to exclude, by conjecture and suspicion, these passages from the English Bible, it would be a loss so great, and an unsettlement of certainties so disastrous, that all the benefit of minute improvements in the *textus receptus*, and its interpretation, could hardly compensate the mischief.

X.

COMPARISON OF FRANKLIN'S PRINTED EDITIONS  
WITH HIS OWN AUTOGRAPHIC MANUSCRIPT.

In the history of the manuscripts and printed editions of the Autobiography of Franklin there is room for nearly all the controversies that have been rife concerning the sacred books. The very authorship of the whole work might have been assailed, on the ground that whereas the printed edition of 1817 began, "To William Franklin, Governor of New Jersey," the autograph begins, "Dear Son"; and the French translation, "*Mon cher fils.*" The authorship of the Apocalypse has been denied for less satisfactory reasons than these, though the best of external evidence supports it, and it can not be denied that the book opens with the announcement of John as its author. There is no such formal announcement in the autograph of Franklin; but there is a covert announcement in the interpolation at the commencement, where the printed edition reads, "To William Franklin, Governor of New Jersey, Dear Son," etc.

As a fair example of the nature and extent of the changes in the text we take the first specimen on the first page.

FROM THE EDITION OF 1817.

Imagining it may be equally agreeable to you to *bare* the circumstances of my life, many of which you are unacquainted with, and expecting the enjoyment of a few weeks' uninterrupted leisure I sit down to write them. Besides, there are some other inducements that *excite me to this undertaking*. From the poverty and obscurity in which I was born and in which I passed my earliest years, I have raised myself to a state of affluence and some degree of *celebrity* in the world. As constant good fortune has accompanied me even to an advanced period of life, my posterity will perhaps be desirous of learning the means which I employed, and which, thanks to Providence, so well succeeded with me. They may also deem them fit to be imitated, should any of them find themselves in similar circumstances.

FROM THE AUTOGRAPH, PAGE 1.

Imagining it may be equally agreeable to you to *know* the circumstances of my life, many of which you are *yet* unacquainted with, and expecting a week's uninterrupted leisure in my *pressed country retirement* I sit down to write them *for you*.

To which I have besides some other inducements. Having emerged from the poverty and obscurity in which I was born and bred to a state of affluence and some degree of *reputation* in the world, and having gone so far through life with a considerable share of felicity, the conducting means I made use of, which, with the blessing of God, so well succeeded, my posterity may like to know, as they may find some of them suitable to their own situation, and therefore fit to be imitated.

Now to this comparison we add, for the purpose of showing more clearly the alterations which the text had undergone, the same opening paragraph of Franklin's life, as it is found in the London and Glasgow editions of the Autobiography, printed by C. Whittingham at Chiswick in 1821.

“MY DEAR SON:—I have amused myself with collecting some little anecdotes of my family. You may remember the inquiries I made, when you were with me in England, among such of my relations as were then living; and the journey I undertook for that purpose. To be acquainted with the particulars of my parentage and life, many of which are unknown to you, I flatter myself will afford the same pleasure to you as to me. I shall relate them upon paper: it will be an agreeable employment of a week’s uninterrupted leisure, which I promise myself during my present retirement in the country. There are also other motives which induce me to the undertaking. From the bosom of poverty and obscurity in which I drew my breath and spent my earliest years, I have raised myself to a state of opulence, and to some degree of celebrity in the world. A constant good fortune has attended me through every period of life to my present advanced age; and my descendants may be desirous of learning what were the means of which I made use and which, thanks to the assisting hand of Providence, have proved so eminently successful. They may also, should they ever be placed in a similar situation, derive some advantage from my narrative.”

Franklin’s death was in 1790. In 1791 appeared the French translation of his unfinished Memoirs. In

1793 that translation was retranslated from French to English, and, as we have seen, was the only English version in print until 1817.

A continuation of the Memoirs was written by Dr. Stuber of Philadelphia, "one of the Doctor's intimate friends," carrying the biography, with great interest, down to his death; and the whole continued to be published, with a valuable selection from Franklin's Essays, in various editions in England, even after the publication of Franklin's Life and Works by his grandson.

An extract from the closing pages (London and Glasgow edition of 1824), and a comparison of it with the original, are still more curious and illustrative than the same processes with the commencement.

EDITION OF 1824, FROM THE  
FRENCH.

As a neighbor and old acquaintance, I had kept up a friendly intimacy with the family of Miss Read. Her parents had retained an affection for me, from the time of my lodging in their house. I was often invited thither: they consulted me about their affairs, and I had been sometimes serviceable to them. I was touched with the unhappy situation of their daughter, who was almost

FROM THE AUTOGRAPH.

A friendly correspondence as neighbors and old acquaintances had continued between me and Mrs. Read's family, who all had a regard for me from the time of my first lodging in their house. I was often invited there, and I consulted in their affairs, wherein I sometimes was of service. I pitied poor Miss Read's unfortunate situation, who was generally dejected, seldom cheerful, and

always melancholy, and continually seeking solitude. I regarded my forgetfulness and inconstancy during my abode in London, as the principal part of her misfortune, though her mother had the candor to attribute the fault to herself rather than to me, because, after having prevented our marriage previously to my departure, she had induced her to marry another in my absence.

Our mutual affection revived; but there existed great obstacles to our union. Her marriage was considered, indeed, as not being valid, the man having, it was said, a former wife, still living in England; but of this it was difficult to obtain a proof at so great distance; and supposing it to be true, he had left many debts, for the payment of which his successor might be sued. We ventured, nevertheless, in spite of all these difficulties, and I married her on the 1st September, 1730. None of the inconveniences we had feared happened to us. She proved to me a good and faithful companion, and contributed essentially to the success of my shop. We prospered to-

avoided company. I considered my giddiness and inconstancy when in London as in a great degree the cause of her unhappiness, though the mother was good enough to think the fault more her own than mine, as she had prevented our marrying before I went thither, and persuaded the other match in my absence.

Our mutual affection was revived, but there were now great objections to our union. The match was indeed looked upon as invalid, a preceding wife being said to be living in England; but this could not easily be proved, because of the distance; and though there was a report of his death, it was not certain. Then, though it should be true, he had left many debts, which his successor might be called upon to pay. We ventured, however, over all these difficulties, and I took her to wife September 1st, 1730. None of the inconveniences happened that we had apprehended. She proved a good and faithful helpmate, assisted me much by attending the shop; we throve together,

gether, and it was our mutual study to render each other happy. Thus I corrected, as well as I could, this great error of my youth.

Our club was not at that time established at a tavern. We held our meetings at the house of Mr. Grace, who appropriated a room for the purpose. Some member observed one day that as our books were frequently quoted in the course of our discussions, it would be convenient to have them collected in the room in which we assembled, in order to be consulted upon occasion; and that, by thus forming a common library of our individual collections, each would have the advantage of using the books of all the other members, which would nearly be the same as if he possessed them all himself. The idea was approved, and we accordingly brought such books as we thought we could spare, which were placed at the end of the club-room. They amounted not to so many as we expected; and though we made considerable use of them, yet some inconveniences resulting from want of care, it was agreed, after about a year, to discontinue the collection; and

and have ever endeavored to make each other happy. Thus I corrected that great *erratum*, as well as I could.

About this time, our club meeting, not at a tavern, but in a little room of Mr. Grace's, set apart for that purpose, a proposition was made by me, that since our books were often referred to in our disquisitions upon the queries, it might be convenient to us to have them altogether where we met, that upon occasion they might be consulted; and by thus clubbing our books to a common library, we should, while we liked to keep them together, have each of us the advantage of using the books of all the other members, which would be nearly as beneficial as if each owned the whole. It was liked and agreed to, and we filled one end of the room with such books as we could best spare. The number was not so great as we expected; and though they had been of great use, yet some inconveniences occurring for want of due care of them, the collection, after about a year, was separated, and each took his books home again. I drew up the propo-



each took away such books as belonged to him.

It was now that I first started the idea of establishing by subscription a public library. I drew up the proposals, had them engrossed in form by Brockden, the attorney, and my project succeeded, as will be seen in the sequel.

sals, got them put into form by our great scrivener, Brockden, and by the help of my friends in the Junto, procured fifty subscribers of forty shillings each to begin with, and ten shillings a year for fifty years; the term our company was to continue. We afterwards obtained a charter, the company being increased to one hundred; this was the mother of all the North American subscription libraries, now so numerous.

Here ends that portion of the Autobiography which first appeared in the French language, translated from the English MS. and then translated back from that French into English. The editor says "the life of Dr. Franklin, as written by himself, so far as it has yet been communicated to the world, breaks off in this place. We understand that it was continued by him somewhat farther, and we hope that the remainder will, at some future period, be communicated to the public."

On comparison of these extracts the reader can not but remark two particulars; first the greater length and wordiness of the French-English memoir; second the manner in which, nevertheless, a considerable degree of the simplicity and naturalness of the origi-

nal narrative has been maintained. In the French it must have been still more exactly a preservation of Franklin's style. It is wonderful that any measure of the original vivacity and ease could have held its freshness, through such transmutations in languages so diverse.

The three first laws of internal evidence out of the seven canons described by Scrivener in the sixth chapter of his "Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament," are illustrated in these extracts, especially the third rule, from Griesbach: "Brevior lectio præferenda est verbosiori." The shortest reading is to be preferred to the more verbose. It is more likely to be the true, the inspired original.

The first of these rules, "Proclivi Scriptioni præstat ardua"; the more difficult to be preferred to the easier, as more likely to be genuine; is not so manifest. In the case of Franklin's MS. it fails, for here the easiest is at once the briefest, and the genuine. In fact, sometimes, the wordy commentator, attempting to make the original plainer, makes the explanation more difficult.

Few things in the history of literature are more curious and interesting than this comparison of different copies of the writings of one of the most celebrated men in the world. Few things are more instructive than the variations of style, language,

formation of sentences, shades of thought and inference, characteristics of opinion and emotion, even in the space of two or three pages; and especially, as may be seen on a comparison of the last eight pages of the Autobiography with the first, the difference of manner and words between Franklin's earliest and latest style of composition. Not so much indeed, as between Burke's *Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful*, and his *Reflections on the French Revolution*, or even between this last great work and his *Letters on a Regicide Peace*; but enough to show how widely different the same author's style may be, at different periods of his life, even in the progress of a few years, and with the same opinions; and yet no just ground of argument whatever for denying the same authorship unquestioned in either case. Original genius, like murder, will out, and will demonstrate itself. The Autobiography of Franklin might have had a hundred different versions; but this would have made no difference as to the conviction, the proof, of its being Franklin's in every part. The grandson might alter it, the translations might disfigure it, but the seals of originality and truth remain the same.

And thus this work of genius had such vital power, that its essence was diffused as a present energizing spirit into every translation, so that the most sur-

prising variations from the original still preserved its indisputable truth. The qualities of Franklin's style, like some exquisite natural odors, were retained through every medium, nor could any transcription conceal them, or prevent their fragrance. There was a constraining spirit of delicacy and humor, an originality and sincerity of thought and feeling, an organic law of simplicity and purity, forbidding any such departure from the original mould as would interfere with the conviction of its identity.

Now the question recurs, if natural idiosyncrasy and artlessness and charm of style possess such indestructible life and freshness, as to insure the whole world so absolutely against a forgery, against the possibility of it, and against any loss of the original creative genius, how much greater may be the assurance of the undiminished power of transmitted inspired productions for the support of an immortal life? And this is the Word, which by the gospel is preached unto you, "but not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth."

## XI.

### AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MOSES—CHRIST AND GENESIS— INSPIRATION AND UNITY OF THE PENTATEUCH.

The Autobiography of Moses, being contained in the Pentateuch, the very beginning of all known Hebrew and human literature, the beginning of all the evidences of divine inspiration, it is not wonderful that this commencement of God's Book for us, and of our faith in it towards Him, should have had fiery trials to pass through, before it could stand, after four thousand years, as the acknowledged head-spring of all human certainties of faith.

The attacks against it began with the assertion, that the art of writing was unknown among the Hebrews of that early period. But one such position after another had to be relinquished, till Gesenius admitted that they knew how to write at least two thousand years before the Christian era, and De Wette himself said at length that the art of writing among the Hebrews might properly be assumed as commencing with Moses, the author and lawgiver of the Hebrew State. But unless invented among them by and for themselves, it must have been a

part of their education in Egypt, where indeed they could not have been ignorant of it.

Havernick, in his account of the progress and variety of the attacks upon the Pentateuch (Introd. to the P., pp. 441, 442) refers to the fact that Spinoza regarded Deuteronomy as the book that was *first composed*, and Ezra as the compiler of the *whole collection*. According to De Wette, Genesis and Exodus belonged to the period from Samuel to Jeroboam; Leviticus and Numbers to the Assyrian captivity; and Deuteronomy to the Babylonian. Volney maintained that the whole was compiled by Hilkiah, Shaphan and Jeremiah in company.

The manifest character of Genesis, as the necessary introduction to the whole of the Scriptures, and the key, without which, the Pentateuch would be a more confounding and impossible riddle than a mountain of gold mines, with excavations and streets and the tools and skeletons of the miners, discovered on the shoulders of Mont Blanc,—is denied or ignored by these critics, because, if admitted, it would prove the supernatural unity and significance of the whole Bible. For it contains the Principia, the facts that are axioms and governing guides in the interpretation; the letters and figures of the combination requisite for opening the Safe; the seeds and laws of the spiritual universe that follows; the roots of Proph-

ecy; the solution of the riddles of our human nature and experience; the demonstration and justification of the Divine Attributes and government; the Creation, the Fall, the predicted Redemption, the first family, the first sin, the first remorse, the first pardoning mercy, the first faith, preventing despair, the first worshipping altar, the first disclosure of the way of return to God by sacrifice, the typical institutes of instruction in the way of salvation, until the seed of the woman should bruise the Serpent's head.

Genesis at the beginning accounts for all that follows. Genesis taken away, denied, or charged as a forgery, as the work of liars a thousand years later, successive and conspiring, keeping up a *pre-concerted plan of unity in lying*, such as is denied to inspiration for the truth, as being impossible; Genesis undermined, the whole of revelation lies in ruins, from Exodus to the Apocalypse. Christ builds His own revelation and divine authority upon it, as God's testimony, and quotes from it the divine foundation of human society, God's inviolable marriage law.

And so in referring to Moses, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, *for he wrote of me*. But if ye believe not *his writings*, how shall ye believe my words?" HIS WRITINGS. Not one book or passage only, but the whole, as the Jews who were listening to Christ, received them, the whole

Pentateuch, of which, if the first book was a forgery, so must be the others, and the testimonies all false concerning Christ, as well as the whole system of Divine Revelation foretelling Christ, and founded solely on *Genesis as God's Word*.

Well may the critics, "tugging to and fro," as Samson between the pillars of the house of Dagon, strive to overthrow Genesis from its place; for the ruin of the whole Scriptures, Old and New, would follow; and Christ as well as Matthew, John and Paul, and all believers and witnesses before and since, are found false witnesses for God, and with His word have perished, and all preaching is vain, and faith impossible.

But Genesis written by Moses, is the very Gospel of Faith in God, and in His system of Mercy through Christ, and the redemption and training of the guilty soul by promises fulfilled in Christ. That book is the only solution of the Decalogue, and the Sabbath, and of the Levitical books of history and of the divine statutes, not one of which could have been received or regarded, but by those who KNEW the divineness of the preceding recitals, and that they themselves were held by them; containing vast, indisputable facts to which these statutes and the whole history were continually making reference; the genealogies and chronologies of mankind; the confusion



of languages and dispersion of races; the immortality of man, the origin and consequences of sin against God, the translation of Enoch; the flood upon the world of the ungodly, the preaching and ark-building of Noah, and God's covenant through him for perpetual generations with all mankind; and then the calling of Abraham, and the covenant with him, and the oft-repeated promises of its perpetuity. "In thee and in thy seed shall all families of the earth be blessed."

The human frame might as well be called Man, without the head and brain, as the Scriptures a divine revelation, without Genesis. Most justly does Kurtz, quoted by Lange, remark (*History of the Old Covenant*, i. p. 46), that "the Pentateuch is the living foundation, and the necessary presumption of the whole Old Testament history, not less than of the entire Old Testament literature. Both of these, and with them Christendom, as their fruit and completion, would resemble a tree without roots, if the composition of the Pentateuch were transferred to a later period of Israelitish history."

And to any later period than that of Moses, or to any other author, it can not be transferred, without in the first place making Moses himself the primeval forger, and every subsequent assumed or conjectured writer in his name a double forger, an inventor of

lies, and of the name and inspiration of Moses to account for them and give them currency.

Including Genesis, the Pentateuch is recognized as Moses' work by all the historians and prophets of the Old Testament; by the Apocryphal writers; by Philo, Josephus, and all the New Testament writers; and expressly and repeatedly by Christ Himself. If then we may put any faith in united, constant, and invariable ancient testimony, THE PENTATEUCH WAS WRITTEN BY HIM.—See Stuart on the Old Testament: Critical History and Defence, p. 49.

But now come a series of disputes, to this day not ended, among the most learned critics, equally learned on either side, maintaining almost as many eras and authorships for the Books of this same Hebrew literature, as there have been centuries since Moses was gathered to his fathers. It is asserted to have been “a nameless multiplicity of compositions at three, four, or six different periods” of the Hebrew history; and yet admitted, each time, by the whole Jewish nation, prophets, priests and kings, as a genuine work of Moses. Each of these critics is perfectly confident of being in the right. And each of them claims the power of determining with absolute certainty, the true eras of a work admitted to have been the authoritative classic of the Hebrew language for three thousand

years; claims this power by virtue of a linguistic infallibility of insight, in regard to the different qualities of style, that must have been truly superhuman, to be able to refer those varying qualities, with such absolute certainty, to the times and circumstances under which they must have arisen.

“Why should I be called upon,” exclaims Prof. Stuart, “to believe in the discriminating powers of an Ewald or a Lengerke, when these powers are exercised as they have plainly been, IN SEPARATING WHAT GOD AND MOSES AND THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD HAVE JOINED TOGETHER?”

The argument from asserted differences in style is quite unreliable, and is seen to be insufficient even by unlettered judges, when they find the destructive critics that advance it, themselves so easily taken in, as they are known to have been, by the publication of the story of the Amber Witch, by Dr. Reinhold of Germany, professing to be a tale of olden time, and received implicitly as such, by the same destructive critics, on the ground of their unerring skill in detecting unquestionable ancient characteristics. The author of this memorable joke had to resort to the testimony of his own neighbors, proved to have been knowing of the author's undertaking, at the very time of it, in order to maintain the authenticity of his own style, against the credulous audacity of these

infallible critics, whom the ingenuity of his own genius had deceived. There are gaps in the argument of the erudite critics against Moses through which their opponents could drive a coach and six of critical, historical, and philological certainties.

The contradictions of these profoundly learned judges and experts are a most instructive phenomenon in the history of literature. At one time they say, with the confidence of a syllogism, The Hebrew of the Pentateuch and of the later Hebrew books is of the same stamp: but the style of Moses could not possibly have been so much like that of the later writers: *ergo*, the Pentateuch must have been written *after the captivity*.

Again they insist upon *a difference so great* of styles and words, archaisms and foreign mixtures, in the Pentateuch itself, and *between Moses and later authors*, that it must have had *many authorships, eras, and inventors*, to constitute what Prof. Stuart justly called such an *Ollapodrida* as they make of it; such a *Corpus Auctorum Omnium*, descriptively distinguished by each author's peculiarities of style and diction. And they insist upon almost every period from Joshua to the Maccabees, as probable and proper for the various production of its separate parts.

The Aramaisms, found here and there in the Hebrew of the Old Testament, may have begun with

the very confusion of tongues, and been in use with Abraham himself, and his relatives and descendants. And certainly the *Jegar-sahadutha* of Laban in Gen. xxxi. 47, noted in the margin of our translation as Chaldaic, and side by side, the *Galeed* of Jacob, both signifying *the heap of witnesses*, show the coexistence of the Aramaic dialect with the Hebrew at that period. And there are similar indications all along the history, down to the very time when Solomon himself was forming his own style, and from his acquaintance and intercourse with other kingdoms, enriching his vocabulary. The wonder is that the Aramaic mixtures are so few, so little tinging the surface, or disturbing the deep tide of the Hebrew, generation after generation, for a thousand years.

If the Canaanites, and other races, by whom the Israelites were seduced to mingle even with God's worship so many idolatrous abominations, had made the same inroads and conquests of corruption in the language as they did in the morals and manners of the people, they would have become such as Nehemiah found some of them that had married wives of Ashdod, Ammon and Moab, with their children speaking "half in the speech of Ashdod, and unable to speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people"—Neh. xiii. 23, 24. As late as the reign of Hezekiah it is seen (II Kings xviii.

26) that only the higher class in Jerusalem could understand the Assyrian language, but the common people could not. The officers of Hezekiah entreated Rabshakeh to make his communications in the language of his master, and not in Hebrew to the Jews. But the great Assyrian scoffer and railer immediately poured out his billingsgate upon the people in the Jews' language.

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## XII.

ERAS, PERMANENCE, AND SAMENESS OF THE HEBREW LANGUAGE—A SHECHINAH OF GOD'S PRESENCE—URIM AND THUMMIM FOR THE SOUL.

Not till a much later period, not till the Canon of divine inspiration was completed, and the whole ready for translation, was there that rapid disuse of Hebrew and introduction of the Syriac, which ended in the prevalence of the latter dialect, along with the Greek; the Hebrew having become practically a dead language at the time of Christ, though incorruptibly preserved in the pages of the Old Testament. Those pages contained the prophetic and historic inspired demonstrations to which Christ was to make his appeals, and God had kept the original language of His own revelation; unchanged from age to age,

never permitting the written instrumentalities of His grace, the conveyancers of His thoughts, to be degraded by adoption of the utterances of idolaters.

It was a grand religious, prayerful halleluia tongue, worthy to have been given to Adam and Eve in Eden for communion with God and the angels, as perhaps it *was* given; and in the art of writing, worthy of God's own autograph in tables of stone. And God kept the sacred, unsullied verbal purity of this revelation for every age, by His inspiring Spirit in the mind, heart, and genius of His prophets from Moses and David down to Isaiah, Habakkuk, and Malachi. "My words, which I have put in thy mouth, and my Spirit that is upon thee, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever."—Is. lix. 21.

The river of their language was God's blessing for the people of Palestine like the Nile for Egypt. It was as the dew on Hermon, as the snows and cedars of Lebanon, as the voice of many waters, as the thunder of the whirlwind, as the still small voice entering the contrite and adoring soul. The voices of immortality, eternity, the outcries of guilt, hope, and despair poured through it; the trials, miseries, spiritual anguish and faith of Job; the prayers of Moses, the man of God; the confessions, supplications and

praises of David, Solomon, Asaph, Jonah, Hezekiah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel; such measureless heights and depths of contrasted and yet divinely taught spiritual experience. through fifty generations of men seeking after God, and *finding Him*, their portion, their redemption, their dwelling-place, their life, their refuge forever. "In God will I praise His Word; in Jehovah will I praise His Word." God Himself was in it, His way in the sea, His path in the great waters. It was the river, "the streams whereof shall make glad the City of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High."

Herder called this language "an abyss of verbs and verbal derivatives, a sea of energetic expressions, agitated and tossing with life and motion." It could put earthquakes and lightnings into single words. Nouns are used as adjectives; every noun looking to the verb as its ancestor, and transmitting the original strength to its derivations; still preserving through all changes the life and energy of the parent stock. Conjunction, pronoun, and verb may form but one word; object, subject, and predicate may be uttered in one. The very tenses were interchangeably a concentration of past, present, and to come; an image of the Incarnate Word from the beginning; the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.

It was a language of bold personifications and pow-



erful metaphors, investing abstract ideas and inanimate objects with all the vivid attributes of existence. The morning stars are *sons of the dawn*; arrows are *sons of the bow, or of the quiver*; the hills are *girded with exultation*; the deep *uttereth its voice and lifteth up its hands on high*; the ark *walks upon the face of the waters*; the blood of Abel *cries from the ground*; death is the *king of terrors*, and the *shadow of death is on the eyelids*; the neck of the war-horse is *clothed with thunder*. The voice of Jehovah *breaketh the cedars of Lebanon*; the mountains skip like sons of the unicorn. The pillars of heaven itself *tremble and are astonished* at His reproof. Hell is naked before Him, and destruction hath no covering. He hangeth the earth upon nothing. His voice divideth the lightnings. It is God everywhere, and Nature itself worshipping and obedient, and vocal with praise.

The permanent, original, organic structure of the language, its sublimity, its pathos, its simplicity, strength, conciseness, its searching, penetrating introversions, its expressions as earthquakes, its figurative power, its fitness at once for rural, peaceful, and terrific imagery, the dew and the deluge, the soft descending showers and the great rain of God's strength, its nervous compactness and at the same time capacity of exuberant, gorgeous, fiery and seraphic eloquence, its proverbial and parabolic terse-

ness and intense concentration of thought and feeling, its equal facility for the highest possible grandeur and sweetest and most artless simplicity whether of poetry or prose, its lightning flashes, points and diamonds, its creative spirituality, its watchwords of eternity and infinitude, all made it the hiding of God's power, a Shechinah of God's presence, the means of fulfilling God's predictions of the people that should dwell alone, and not be reckoned among the nations. From childhood it was as a Urim and Thummim for the soul's discipline; and for the tribes a divine magnetism, binding them in a mental girdle of intensest hereditary nationality and patriotism, stronger than the rite of their physical lineage. Much every way was the advantage, chiefly, because that unto them were committed the ORACLES OF GOD, and the stewardship itself exalted and preserved the nation, even though the nation broke the law; till Christ came, the Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of His people Israel.

If the preservation of such purity of language, in such combined ruggedness, wealth, and seclusiveness of diction, is surprising, it is not more so than the amazing unchangeable spiritual and literal correspondencies and unities of such a multiplicity of Scripture Manuscripts in the progress of so wide a distribution through distant centuries and tongues; but in

all their testimonies maintaining such indestructible unity as to the attributes and revealed truths of God, and the great doctrines thus known to be essential to the salvation of the soul. If guardian angels had been stationed at every chapter, no greater unanimity could have been secured, no greater protection from injury.

Everywhere the Hebrew Word was, as described by Peter, the Word of God, that liveth and abideth forever, Emmanuel, God with us; as described by Paul, the sword of the Spirit, discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart; in its very character and elements separate from sinners, yet laying hold upon them with mercy and love; reprovng sin, requiring holiness, teaching faith, penitence, prayer, submission, confidence in God's promises; the life of love, the beauty of holiness, the exceeding sinfulness of sin; in all things the prophetic incarnation of a Saviour, and a language for preparing, and afterwards demonstrating, the way of the Lord.

So was it a sacred speech, given and wrought out, on purpose to be translated into all languages, and endowed with a forecasting, foreshortening, foreholding and despotic fitness for infusing its own meaning and spirit into whatever dialect. A language that was to wait, in its perfection by the Spirit of God, till the Greek tongue should have been prepared for

the conveyance of its saving truths to all nations. Then came the Septuagint translation, in that dialect of the gospel-Plato; the oldest of all the versions whatever of the Old Testament; and for it, a people using that tongue as their vernacular, to receive and transmit its newly acquired treasures all over the world. From David and Solomon backwards to Moses, whose Pentateuch was certainly the beginning, and in many respects the perfection of the Hebrew language and literature, there is not a solitary remnant of composition, the elements of which are not on the whole perfectly similar, and equally intelligible to the minds of all who could read their native dialect. There are no intervals of time, or causes sufficient to produce or account for any such changes in the language, or in its grammatical or verbal forms, as took place in the English language, for example during the period between the eras of Wickliffe and Chaucer and that of Shakespeare, or between the era of Sir John Mandeville and that of Addison, Goldsmith, Johnson, and Burke.

There are better arguments for affirming and believing that Burke could not have been the author of the "Letters on a Regicidal Peace," and of the "Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful," than there are that Solomon could not have been the author of Ecclesiastes, and also of Proverbs and the Canticles. The

Hebrew language is essentially the same in all the books known to have been in possession of the Hebrews from the time of Moses to the times of David and Solomon: more identical than the English language as developed in the pages of Alfred and Chaucer, Shakspeare and Bacon. Now it has been affirmed that Lord Bacon wrote Shakspeare's plays, but never that Shakspeare wrote Lord Bacon's "Essays," or the "Abridgment of Learning." But conceive the arrogance of a French or Italian critic of English literature, who should affirm that because of the many modern words and inflections, as well as characteristic qualities of style, it is clear that neither Shakspeare nor Bacon could have written at an earlier period than that of Thackeray or Charles Dickens! The truth is that so great and remarkably identical are the forms and qualities of the Hebrew tongue and yet so varied the genius of the writers of it, that remain to us, that for every criticism and line of argument assigning one period for the authorship of any one book, we could bring an opposite hypothesis of equal probability for another. Such different theories have in fact been propounded and argued as incontrovertible by the most learned critics.

The questions as to who wrote the book of Job, and when was it written, are still disputed, and

probably always will be. The array of scholars on either side, from the period of Moses down to that of Jeremiah and the captivity, both proves the impossibility of deciding, and the acknowledged sameness of the Hebrew language, for more than fifteen hundred years; so that the author of the book may have been any inspired man of genius from the era of the Patriarchs down to that of Malachi. In fact, while a great number of critics contend that the book was written before the time of Moses, many others, with equal positiveness refer it to the time of Solomon, and others to the Chaldee period, about the time of Jeremiah. Others cut up the book and its contents into different periods, and deny altogether the genuineness of some of its most important and instructive chapters and characters. Thus it is manifest that no reliance whatever can be placed upon these critical opinions; but the historic reality and truth of the books in question remain unimpeached.

### XIII.

RESTLESSNESS OF SCEPTICAL SAGACITY—FRANKLIN ON SCOURING THE ANCHOR—AN INFALLIBLE INSPIRATION NECESSARY.

There seems no end to the restlessness and pride of the sceptical sagacity of modern critics, and its capacity of supporting the most frivolous conjectures with an array of arguments and erudition, till quantity alone shall supply the place of proof. It is a blessing that this passion for conjectural criticism, and destructive experiments with acids, is applied to so useful a purpose as that which it really and unintentionally has accomplished, namely, the testing of the metal and brightening the links of our Biblical Christian faith. The self-satisfaction and contentment of the workmen in this undertaking remind us of one of Franklin's anecdotes, scattered with such *curiosa felicitas* and exquisite hearty humor through his Memoirs.

The Indians had burned Gnadenhut, a village settled by the Moravians, and Franklin had been appointed military commander to take charge of the north-western frontier of Pennsylvania, with five hundred and sixty recruits under his command, whose great work at first was to build a stockade fort

against the Indians, mounted with one swivel gun, which they fired as soon as fixed, to let the Indians know that they had such pieces; and this business was finished in a week, though it rained so hard every other day, that the men could not work.

“This gave me occasion,” says Franklin, “to observe that when men are employed, they are best contented; for on the days they worked they were good-natured and cheerful, and, with the consciousness of having done a good day’s work, they spent the evening jollily; but on our idle days they were mutinous and quarrelsome, finding fault with their pork, bread, etc., and in continual ill-humor; which put me in mind of a sea captain, whose rule it was to keep his men constantly at work; and when his mate once told him they had done every thing, and there was nothing further to employ them about, ‘*Oh,*’ says he, ‘*make them scour the anchor.*’” He might have added, ‘Tis the biggest thing they have to handle; make them scour it bright.

The workmen of Satan are scouring the anchor of our faith, and making it every day more manifest, though they do not even believe in its existence, nor in that invisible world of retribution according to character, where, within the veil, it is cast, nor friend nor foe can move it. But the chain cable of evidence, by which in this world we lay hold upon



it, is visible through all the generations of mankind. In our own day, what incredible multitudes of scholars are at work upon it, seemingly, with equal contentment and delight; some to break its links, or reduce it to nothing better than a rope of sand. But in the end, all are working out the same result of scouring and strengthening, brightening and confirming the Word of Truth Divine, by which the world of souls is held to God our Saviour. Once men sneered at the iron links, as being all rust; now they are so busy, hammering and filing, that no more rust can possibly gather or remain.

It is through a vast and complicated moral and spiritual as well as critical filtration, that the gospels and epistles have come down to us in their purity. No documentary evidence in any literature is to be compared for certainty and strength with that of the foundations of the Christian faith. The result of the profoundest scholarship, industry, and scientific skill, through the investigations of four thousand years, by enemies and friends, has been only a scouring of the anchor and strengthening of the links of our spiritual certainties; a purification of seed for the sower and bread for the eater to all generations has been accomplished, till between the upper and nether millstones of our knowledge and our reasoning, our history and experience, nothing on earth is so perfectly

ascertained for the satisfaction of a candid mind; nothing of philosophy or science arrayed beneath the seals of such incontrovertible and irresistible security.

The question of an original gospel from which all four drew their materials, and which all four relied upon, has been debated, as if it were some approximation to a settlement of certainties. But what certainty is possible without that of a divine inspiration? And that is not possible to decide but by internal evidence. Who ever beheld the invisible restraining or impelling monitor in the mind of Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John, withholding from falsehood, directing to the selection of facts, guiding the judgment, recording the processes of divine reasoning, thought, feeling, purpose, in the mind of Christ, the processes of wonder, astonishment, conviction, faith, repentance, unbelief, or gratitude and love, in the hearts of multitudes; the characters of priests and people unveiled, photographed by themselves passing before the divine camera; the succession of witnesses and records of secret processes known only to the Omniscient, and incapable of being imagined; the exquisite touches of light upon the dark places of souls keeping out of it; such as in that record in Mark ix., "What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? *And they held their peace, for by the way they had disputed among themselves who should be the greatest.*"

Moreover, the record of Christ's conversations and instructions, too precious to be held in tradition merely, too important in their verbal accuracy to be recalled by unaided memory, too sacred to be varied, except in words which the Holy Ghost teacheth, and in which the variations would serve to present and transmit the truth more exactly, in all its lights and possible meanings, as God should please; these, and a hundred other things, were requisites of divine inspiration by which alone could any Gospel for the whole of mankind and for all ages, infallible and all-sufficient, be prepared, or any original set before the mind, from which copies could be taken. And so, the claim of inspiration announced in the 2d Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, is just this, "We have the mind of Christ, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God." The mind of Christ for the reproduction of the truth of Christ, in whom alone is life, and the life is the light of men. "For the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God, and we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God, which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual."

If any thing is taught here, and to be received, because of its infinite importance, it is the truth of a verbal inspiration; such an inspiration being both argued, as necessary to the perfect conveyance of the mind of Christ, and the full belief, understanding, and interpretation of the same; for which also the same Holy Spirit is given, and is promised to be always imparted in answer to prayer. Here is absolute security for our faith, because the gift of this Spirit is free to all, so that all may become its possessors and God's witnesses. So that we can not be sufficiently grateful for these immutable mortgages, given us of God in Christ, on the certainty of our heavenly inheritance, if only we believe in Him, and pray to God for mercy in His name. And blessed be God, all that men need is thus to believe and pray and act accordingly.

Now if the Scriptures were not to be relied upon for absolute veracity in things concerning other men, and in the historic settings of providence and events in and through which the predictions concerning Christ had their beginning and reality, how could they be relied upon as notices concerning Him? Could the veracity of the Mosaic account concerning Abraham, or concerning Moses himself be impeached, all their reliability would fail as an indisputable reference concerning the Saviour to come. If those Script-

ures could not be trusted as authority concerning the creation of man originally in God's image, and his loss of that image by sin, they certainly could not concerning his new creation by grace, and the restoration of that image through the incarnation, sufferings, and death of Christ. The testimony concerning Christ in the Scriptures extended over the whole range of those Scriptures from Genesis to Malachi. Its infallibility was grounded in the fact that all those Scriptures were the Word of God. They could not be the Word of God merely in those passages that Christ selected for exposition, and the word of man and fallible, in the whole course of providential and historical narrative, any more than the painting of the transfiguration could be relied upon as Raphael's, if you could not believe that Raphael designed it, and gave the central figure its relative position. If you accuse the writers of mistakes in other things, you are bound to demonstrate those mistakes, and when you have done this, then it will be in order to weigh them against the testimony of Christ, that the books containing those mistakes and sending them down to posterity as records of truth were the Word of God. When that demonstration is given to the world, then and not till then can you invalidate that testimony.

## XIV.

CATALOGUES AND QUALITIES OF AUTHORITIES—  
TISCHENDORF'S DISCOVERY—METHODS OF DE-  
STRUCTION—CERTAINTIES OF RESULTS.

Let us glance now at the list of our indisputable authorities, and their remarkable agreement, through a period beginning with our first knowledge of the creation (through faith understanding that the worlds were framed by the Word of God), and continuing unabated to the present hour.

It is the catalogue, undisputed, 1st, of Ancient Manuscripts; 2d, of Ancient Versions, and 3d, Quotations from the Scriptures in the books of ancient writers.

The manuscripts of the New Testament greatly preponderate, both in number and in age. Those of the Old Testament have come down to us from originals wholly in the keeping of the Jews, but neither in Hebrew nor Greek do we possess any known and acknowledged autographs.

Three thousand Hebrew and Greek manuscripts in the space of some four thousand years, are found concurring in their testimony, after the most intense and lynx-eyed examination, with such unanimity, that the

truths first dimly revealed have been steadily growing in clearness, distinctness, and vastness of scope. The primal nebulae have been discovered as clusters of distinct stars. The gravitation of all these worlds is towards the same centre; the law of their unity the same. Apparent aberrations have been found harmonious with the whole. Not a single comma, misplacement or vacuum or accident of copying, or intrusion of glosses, contradicts one of the grand truths, or interrupts or renders indistinct or doubtful their congruity or the oneness of their testimony.

Among these treasures there are only five Greek manuscripts of a date so early as the fourth and sixth centuries. From the fourth to the tenth centuries we have one hundred and twenty-seven in uncial characters; that is, written in Greek capital letters. From the tenth to the fifteenth centuries, we have fourteen hundred and fifty-six manuscripts in cursive or running hand of small characters, with capital letters only at the beginning of sentences or paragraphs.

Greek manuscripts are divided into two classes the earliest being named *uncial*, or written with capital letters, unconnected with each other, and with no spaces between the words; the latest, *cursive*, or in running hand letters, with complete punctuation, much as in printed books. The Greek manuscripts

of the New Testament from the fourth century to the tenth were in *uncial* letters, but from the ninth or tenth century to the invention of printing the *cursive* letters were employed.

The term *uncial* seems to have been derived from the word *uncia*, an inch, denoting the size of the letters. After the tenth century many manuscripts bear dates; the earliest dated being A. D. 949.

Twelve hundred and seventy-seven separate Greek manuscripts of the New Testament are carefully described by Scrivener, with an index of the countries and places where they are now deposited.

Our first word for paper comes from the Nile and the cradle of Moses, *πάπυρος*,—Latin, *papyrus*,—being the name of the Egyptian rush or flag, of the *liber* of which, or the inner fibrous bark, came the most common material on which books were written by the Greeks and Romans; whence came the Latin name for a book. Parchment was a much later invention by the King of Pergamus, and was a term applied to the integuments of sheep or goats, manufactured into a writing material. Brande says that as early as the beginning of the eighth century the use of papyrus for writing was almost entirely superseded by parchment, which was in familiar use when the Gospels were written. No existing MS. of the Gospels is written on papyrus.



The earliest example on vellum it is supposed can not date higher than the middle of the fourth century.

Towards the end of that century a practice became prevalent of dying the vellum purple, and stamping the letters in silver and gold. This increased the preciousness and beauty of the volumes, and made a library the greatest of treasures.

But *vellum* became so scarce and dear that at an early period of the Christian era the practice arose of erasing the old-first writing from the skins employed more anciently, to make room for writing new manuscripts, in the place of the old. Several of the most precious monuments of sacred learning are thus preserved termed *codices rescripti* or *palimpsests* (*παλιμψηστα*) erased, and written again.

The Codex Sinaiticus (fourth century), discovered by Tischendorf, is made of the finest skins of antelopes, the leaves being so large that a single animal would furnish only two.

The Codex Vaticanus, contemporary, of a beautiful *vellum*, a term strictly applied to the delicate skins of very young calves.

The Codex Alexandrinus (fifth century) equally beautiful.

Previous to the tenth century existing manuscripts of the New Testament could be found only by tens; afterwards by hundreds. The latest discovered is

the Sinaitic manuscript so providentially found and rescued from destruction by Tischendorf at the Convent of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai. The monks of that Convent had been accustomed to resort to their library for fuel of light-wood to kindle the fires in their stove. How much precious material may have been destroyed in that way, who can tell? In a basketful of papers about to be used for that purpose, for the comfort of their visitor, Tischendorf noticed a number of vellum leaves, and picking them out for examination, found that they contained portions of the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament, forty-three leaves of which he secured. The volume to which they belonged he found was probably as ancient as the fourth century. But so soon as the monks learned from him this fact, it not only acted as an insurance of the rest of their treasures from destruction by the flames, but they refused to let him have any other of the leaves thus rescued.

In 1853, he was there again, but could learn nothing more about the manuscripts, and abandoned all hope of recovering them till in the year 1859, in the month of February being again at the monastery under authority from the emperor of Russia, a manuscript was shown to him by the steward, which he immediately found to be that inestimable complete copy of the New Testament afterwards copied by

him, containing three hundred and forty-five and a half leaves of beautiful vellum, one hundred and ninety-nine leaves containing portions of the Septuagint, and one hundred and forty-seven and a half the whole New Testament, along with the Epistle of Barnabas, and part of the Shepherd of Hermas. The date was supposed to have been the middle of the fourth century. Meanwhile, the original document was presented by the monks to the emperor of Russia. In the year 1862, an edition of three hundred copies was published by the emperor, the czar, in commemoration of the thousandth anniversary of the empire. This Sinaitic manuscript is supposed to be one of the fifty copies of Scripture prepared by Eusebius, A. D. 331, by order of Constantine, for the use of the churches and people in Constantinople.

How vast and deplorable must have been the destruction of these inestimable treasures, during the dark ages of Romish ignorance and superstition, we are enabled to guess from what is related by Boccaccio of his own experience about the year 1350. For he says that on asking to see the library of the celebrated Monastery of Monte Casino, he was shown into a dusty, doorless room, where he found many of the valuable MSS. mutilated, and his guide told him, that the monks were in the habit of tearing leaves from the codices, to turn them into psalters

for children, or amulets for women, which they would sell for four or five *soldi* apiece.

Besides this method of destruction there was that of the use of vellum or parchment leaves once written upon to be covered by new works. Old manuscripts thus usurped the place of new, and were called, as above, palimpsests,—leaves written over again. The treatise of Cicero *De Republica* was found in the Vatican Library at Rome as late as 1825, in a manuscript which had been covered with the writing of a Commentary of St. Augustine on the Psalms. Some fifty years earlier a palimpsest book of Livy was discovered in the same way.

Buchanan (*Christian Researches*, p. 312) says that when he questioned the Jews concerning the old copies of the Scriptures, which had been read in the synagogues from age to age, some told him it was usual to *bury them, when decayed by time and use*. Others said that this was not always the case.

The scarcity of books before the art of printing was so great, that a single volume was a precious treasure. A thousand manuscripts made an exceedingly large library. A monastery was celebrated that possessed so great a number. Books were chained to the shelves and reading desks in libraries, to be read for an hour or two by readers having this privilege in turn. A copy of the Bible was at one time

chained in the churches for the use of such persons as could read, and these read it to such as could not.

At Cambridge are deposited two manuscripts of the Peshito Syriac, brought by Buchanan in 1806 from the Malabar coast. One of them was thought by some to have been written about the seventh century; but Mr. Bensly discovered in it a figure of Joshua in armor, of the time of the crusades, and reduced its date to the eleventh or twelfth.—*Scrivener's Int.*, 280.

In Buchanan's *Christian Researches*, 310–315, there is a deeply interesting account of the Black and White Jews, and their Manuscripts, which Buchanan found, as also printed Hebrew books, almost in every house. The description of his discoveries in Hebrew is as remarkable as Tischendorf's in the New Testament. One of the MSS. procured in Malabar was an old copy of the Books of Moses, written on a roll of soft flexible leather composed of thirty-seven skins sewed together, dyed red, the whole about forty-eight feet in length, twenty-two inches wide, in some parts worn out, and the holes sewed up with pieces of parchment. It had been used in the worship of the Synagogue. This Manuscript was examined in England and compared, word for word, letter for letter, with the Hebrew edition of Van der Hooght. Only forty petty differences were found, not one making the slightest

change in the interpretation, being only the presence or absence of an *i* or *v* without changing the power of a word.—See Gausson on Variations.

Internal evidence sometimes overpowers the strongest external testimony. The means of detecting a mistake in the date, or a conclusion in regard to it, may be found in the very flourishes of the writing, the ornaments that adorn the page, the texture of the material. How many are the instances of discovered forgeries in wills, by water marks discerned in the paper employed.

But when we get at the conscience and heart of a manuscript in its thoughts, its meaning, the demonstrations against all lying may be like the appeal of Solomon by the sword, to the affections of the real mother, bringing out as in sympathetic ink before the fire, the inward, invisible, inimitable handwriting of the soul, the true authorship and ownership, the forgery of which by selfishness, stands convicted in the presence of maternal love. Thus the weight of internal evidence may be sufficient to overbalance that of a hundred manuscripts, confessedly of later origin than the era of the life of the Autographists, or the existence of any known original copy of the book. Produce your Autography. Until then the internal evidence is in a measure supreme. Until then, the evidence of a well authenticated *version*, such as the

Peshito, must take precedence in some respects, of the manuscripts of any later date.

Of the determining ancient authorities nearest to the apostles, Irenæus and the Peshito Syriac Version stand at the head. These two ways meet in the village where the colt shall be found for the Lord's triumphal entrance into Jerusalem. So might Lightfoot and Fuller put the case of our textual witnesses. In all things in which these two agree we shall find a substantial agreement arrived at also by the vast majority and harmony of the witnesses through eighteen centuries. The texts or verbal expressions in which there is any material disagreement will be found so few and unimportant that the unity and simplicity of the evidence of more than fifteen hundred manuscripts, become, when put beside the variations in all other remains of ancient literature, wherein accuracy of the text is sought for, a marvel of certainty, a life-boat of truth above a thousand storms and billows.

The Peshito Version is supposed to have been made in the latter half of the second century. "The person who made it," says Prof. Stuart, "must have been skilled in the Greek of that day, and therefore in the Greek which is substantially the basis of the New Testament diction, which was then spoken in Palestine and Western Asia in general. In such a case we have in the Peshito a witness for the ancient

text, and a help to the sense, in one and the same version.

“Of all the monuments of antiquity now extant, or at least of all yet discovered, I regard the version of the Peshito as the most important in respect to the establishment or verification of the true Greek text. It precedes in age, *by several centuries*, any Greek MS. that we now have; it was confessedly made with great skill and ability. . . . It has been exempt from all the criticisms and tamperings of the Alexandrine or any other Western school of criticism. . . . It has come down to us from the primitive ages in a channel entirely different from that in which the common Greek text has descended.

. . . It appears from the comparison of MSS. so far as this has gone, to have suffered less than is common from the variations made by scribes; and it is therefore a witness above all exception; as to its general testimony for the fidelity and accuracy with which the Greek text has in the main been preserved. No monument of antiquity possesses therefore more to excite critical interest, or even exegetical, than this. The student who is familiar with it can not well entertain a doubt of the early canonicity of the New Testament books in general, and of the importance which the Christian churches in the primitive ages attached to them.”



“The Peshito,” says Scrivener “has well been called the Queen of Versions of Holy Writ, for it is at once the oldest and one of the most excellent of those whereby God’s Providence has blessed and edified the Church.” “Michaelis declared that he could consult no translation with so much confidence in cases of difficulty and doubt.”—Scrivener’s Int., p. 280.

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## XV.

ANTECEDENT PROBABILITIES—BENGEL AND GAUSSEN  
ON THE PLENARY INFALLIBLE INSPIRATION—VAST-  
NESS OF INVESTIGATIONS AND RESULTS.

In judging what ought to be the characteristics of a divine revelation, we find ourselves coinciding with what the writers themselves affirm. They appeal to the impossibility of God, the Father of our spirits, and the giver of His Son to die for us, ever teaching error, when the welfare of the soul is His object. As God is true, and hath given His own Spirit to make known the truth that is in Him, such is our witness; if not, believe us not.

“If I speak not *the words* of my Father,” Christ says, “believe me not. If I do not *the works* of my Father, believe me not. He that sent me is true,

and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of Him. As the Father hath taught me I speak these things. The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me. And the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you. And if men have kept my saying they will keep yours also."

"I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy Word is truth."

It is under such divine assurances as these, that the most faithful students of God's Word have pursued their investigations; and the result is divinely satisfying. The seals of God's truth secure both a plenary and verbal inspiration, in all things necessary for the salvation of the soul.

Well might the pious and conscientious Bengel, whom God employed a hundred and sixty years since, under the pressure of deep doubt and anxiety of soul, exclaim, after long and minute research upon this vital question of the integrity of the original text, "Be no more affrighted. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living, and by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God shall man live. Eat simply the bread of the Scriptures,

such as you find it; and be not disturbed, if perchance you find here and there a little fragment of the millstone which has fallen into it."

How can we present the argument in a manner strong enough for its reality? Of all modern writers on the subject, Dr. Gausson, in his admirable and unanswerable volume on the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, has set it forth with most satisfactory clearness, though since he wrote, a great many profoundly learned scholars, Tischendorf with his newly discovered Sinaitic manuscript among them, have added strength and confidence to his reasoning.

Nature is a divine prophet, first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. The bud predicts and promises the blossom; the blossom promises the fruit; each fulfilment is but the ground of faith for the next; and all are demands for patient trust that God will fulfil His own writings, with equal accuracy in nature and in grace. Inspiration and connected providence are one and the same divine kingdom; creation, with natural law and providence another; both by the same omnipresent, omnipotent, only-wise, God. The infallibility and security of divine testimony for us and for all ages, is a miracle of divine providence and grace.

The oracles of God have been committed for preservation first to the Jewish, second to the Christian

Church; dividing the whole world of knowledge and history into detachments of police, each keeping watch upon the other, with so many lynx-eyed and jealous inquisitors and hierarchs of sectarian animosities, undertaking to govern the world by interpretations resting ultimately upon differences in manuscripts, that nothing can possibly be conceived more sure than the result arrived at, when it is found on the one hand that all the variations of *so many manuscripts* as have been searched out and collated from Sinai to Jerusalem, and from Jerusalem to Rome, and in Europe, Asia, and Africa, do not invade the essential integrity of *any one*: that none of the *variations* in any one either introduce or eliminate a single text or phrase that disfigures or casts doubt upon the verities established *by consent of all*; that a keen and conscientious vigilance *quite supernatural* has been working with transcribers and marginal annotators; that copies have been securely traced to their *prototypes*, and families of copies and translations *to their originals*; till the preservation of human language itself among all races is not a surer attribute of humanity, than the unity and identity of divine truth, together with its capacity of being rendered with practical exactness in all dialects, is both an attribute and proof of a divine revelation for the immortal soul.

Is not this inexpressibly beautiful and precious? Does it not meet and justify the thankful, undoubting confidence, adoration, and love of every believing heart, and every lover of mankind, for such unexampled and inimitable seals of all divine truth, essential to the instruction and salvation of the soul?

This is what the most perfect *a priori* reasoning would require us to demand and expect as a characteristic of divine revelation for all ages and races of mankind. In proportion as we need, in consequence of our sinfulness, infallible directions from God as to the method of redemption, recovery from sin, forgiveness and acceptance with God, in that proportion we are entitled to an unlimited assurance that all the words of God to us are true, and permitted forgeries impossible. The oracles of God shall certainly be with such faithfulness transmitted to us who need them, that the promise of salvation by them shall be as sure for us, as for past ages, that may indeed have stood nearer to God in time than we do, but could never have had firmer ground of trust in His mercy and His faithfulness to all generations, than ourselves and all the families of sinners for whom Christ has died. Always, unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them, and if the word preached did not profit some, it was not for want of such convincing evidence as every rational

soul was permitted to demand, but because of not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

This then is the absolutely safe result which must have been expected from a God faithful to His own covenant of redemption. And truly does Dr. Gaussen affirm, that although "all the libraries containing ancient copies of the sacred books have been called to testify; although the elucidations given by the Fathers of all ages have been studied; although the Arabic, Syriac, Latin, Armenian and Ethiopic Versions have been collated; although all the manuscripts of all countries and ages from the third to the sixteenth century have been collected and examined a thousand times by innumerable critics, who sought as the recompense and glory of their fatiguing vigils, some new text; although the learned men, not satisfied with the libraries of the West, have visited those of Russia, and carried their researches even to the convents of Mount Athos, of Asiatic Turkey and of Egypt, for new copies of the sacred text, they have discovered not even a solitary reading which could cast doubt upon any passage before considered certain. All the variations leave untouched the essential thoughts of each phrase, and affect only points of secondary importance."—See Dr. Gaussen's *Theopneustr.*, page 90, on the *Objections from Variations.*

The result of these labors upon the Word of God, undertaken in many cases by enemies, and designed to overthrow the Christian faith, is "*immense by its nothingness and almighty in its impotence.*" The variations of the manuscripts are of such a nature as to be perpetual assurances against fraud and falsehood. Take them at the largest computation of words, syllables, points, commas, 120,000, and they do not leave in any right reason the slightest shadow of uncertainty as to the truths of which they are the conveyancers from God; but they reveal a Giver of truth with whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning. They make us think of the divine assurance to Jeremiah, "If ye can break my covenant of the day and of the night, that there should be no more day and night in their season, then may the covenant of my word be broken, if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth."

This exactness we justly affirm to be of the nature of a miracle; as really a miracle in the course of the moral world under God's providence, as the exactness of the rising and setting sun without variation of a second of time from the beginning of the creation.

In literal truth we may say, "Forever, O Lord, thy Word is settled in heaven. Thou hast magnified thy Word, *above all thy name.*"

Take the variations in the gross at thirty thousand,

ascertained by the prodigious labors of learned men for three hundred years upon three thousand manuscripts, demonstrating the astonishing preservation of the text in its purity, though copied so many thousand times; in Hebrew during thirty-three centuries, in Greek during eighteen centuries;—could any thing be more satisfactory? The manuscripts of six comedies of Terence, the only copies of his works preserved to us, but copied a thousand times less frequently than those of the New Testament, contain thirty thousand variations. They are of no more weight or importance as diminishing the integrity of the text in either case, than the twelve hundred variations disclosed in the one volume of Franklin's Memoirs, which really are of no importance at all, except as showing the presumption and intrusiveness of the editor. It is therefore refreshing, after the persistent efforts of unbelieving critics to weaken our confidence in the accuracy of our copies of the sacred text, to return and listen to the sound of Bentley's stupendous sledge-hammer, demolishing at a blow the best constructed of their arguments.

For this great critic declared, in his "Remarks on Free Thinking," "that the real text of the sacred writers does not now, since the originals have been so long lost, lie in any single manuscript or edition, but is dispersed in them all. It is competently exact



indeed, even in the worst manuscript now extant; nor is one article of faith or moral precept either perverted or lost in them."

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## XVI.

FRANKLIN'S ILLUSTRATION OF THE INFALLIBILITY  
OF CRITICS—LETTER AND SPIRIT INSEPARABLE.

The professed connoisseurs whether in antiquities of art or literature are liable to self-delusions and impostures by their own manufactured lenses of vision and opinion. The mistakes they sometimes commit are curiously illustrated in one of Franklin's letters to Baskerville, the celebrated type-founder and printer, whose printing-office was destroyed by the Birmingham mob in 1791. Franklin was discoursing concerning the artists of Birmingham, with a gentleman who said that Baskerville would be a means of blinding the eyes of readers, for the strokes of his letters were so thin and narrow as to hurt the eyes, so that he could never read a line of them without pain. "I thought," said Franklin, "you were going to complain of the gloss of the paper, which some object to." "No, no," said he, "I have heard that mentioned, but it is not that; it is in the form and cut of the letters themselves;

they have not the height and thickness of stroke, which make the common printing so much more comfortable to the eye."

"You see," says Franklin, recording this conversation to his friend Baskerville, "this gentleman was a connoisseur. In vain I endeavored to support your character against the charge; he knew what he felt, and could see the reason of it, and several other gentlemen among his friends had made the same observations," etc.

Franklin being mischievously bent to try the judgment of the critic, stepped into his closet, and produced to him a specimen of the printing (as Baskerville's) brought from Birmingham, which Franklin himself had been examining, and could not for the life of him perceive the disproportion of which he complained, and which Franklin begged he would point out to him. "He readily undertook this," says Franklin, "and went over the several founts, showing me everywhere what he thought instances of that disproportion; and declared that he could not even then read *that specimen*, without feeling *very strongly* the pain he had mentioned. I spared him the confusion of being told that *these were the types he had been reading all his life with so much ease to his eyes*: the types his adored Newton was printed with, on which he has pored not a little; nay, the

very types his own book is printed with, for he is himself an author, and yet never discovered this painful disproportion in them, *till he thought they were yours.*"

This anecdote makes one of the most refreshing and instructive and we may add comforting pages in the annals of literature. It is one of the most interesting instances ever known of the possibility of entire self-deception and mistake, through the color-blindness induced by previous opinion, in a matter capable of absolute demonstration to the senses.

There is the same room for prejudice and self-delusion in the examination of manuscripts, language, and style, as of types, spaces, hair-proportions; the same possibility of color-blindness, and incapability of a just comparison and weighing of evidence, especially where moral conclusions and preconceived opinions are at stake. Even in the consideration of the clearest and most irresistible internal evidence possible to be imagined, the weight of it may be set obstinately aside, and the conclusion made to rest upon a mere majority of manuscripts. But it may be said with truth that one witness, *with the moral in its favor*, outweighs a hundred without it. One moral *probability* even, may be of greater convincing authority and satisfaction than ten oppositions of critical

skill. The keenest experts are sometimes the victims of their own confidence. One log-and-line record, under the compass, is worth a hundred charts filled out with supposed naval cruises, and the outlines of ships and reefs and harbors.

Prof. Stuart's rule to his students, for the discovery and fast holding of truth, was just this, Throw away the doubtful texts as useless, but hold fast the sure ones, as entering into that within the veil. "Hold fast the form of *sound words*, which thou hast heard of me, *in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus.*" That was a sailor's knot; the harder pulled upon, the more impossible to give way. One unquestionable proof better than twenty doubtful or suspicious. Having found the one, let the others be turned out of court, or take their turn for what they are competent to testify.

This canon of criticism settled satisfactorily in Prof. Stuart's mind the question as to Paul's authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews. It gave a positive answer instead of a negative. The disregard of this canon has filled our libraries of theological and biblical literature with volumes of vast erudition, the tendency of which is just only to unsettle the mind of the learner, diverting it from certainties to doubts.

"One of the greatest of modern critics, Schleiermacher," says Dr. Arnold of Rugby, himself a critic

more profound, "doubted the genuineness of the Epistles to Timothy. It seems to me that they are *as certainly Paul's, as the Epistle to the Romans.* The doubt arose from his habit, *which many Germans have,* of taking a one-sided view of such questions, and *suffering small objections to prevail over greater confirmations.*" Now a man whose mind is ruled by such a habit is effectually prevented from the possibility of ever becoming a just judge; a whole nation of such scholars could never produce one truly great critic, by whose verdict as a judge, you could safely hold fast.

Such treatment of the Word of God is fatal to the supposition of its divinely inspired unity and authority. There can be no authoritative canon of belief,—not even God Himself could establish it, for such minds; because the anchor of faith in Christ, the Author and Finisher of Faith, is gone. Or rather, instead of being cast in Christ, within the veil, it is thrown down into the hold of the ship, to entangle its flukes in the captain's own cargo of small objections. Thus, some men's cardinal doctrine of justification by faith amounts to just this, and nothing more; self-salvation by their own opinions concerning Christ; and not redemption through His blood, as the Way, the Truth, the Life: not His death, appointed and voluntarily borne in infinite love, as the

propitiation for our sins, and not ours only, but the sins of all mankind, believing in Him.

The letter and the Spirit! BOTH. Not the letter or the Spirit, WHICH? If either be from God, both must be; and when it is known how inevitably a right discernment of the thoughts depends on the use of the moods and tenses, the articles and adverbs, the pronouns and interrogations, of the language, in the words of which, and in no other possible way the meaning (God's meaning), can be conveyed and made known, it becomes an impossibility to determine which is most important, the Spirit or the Word, and it is presumption to attempt a separation of them, or the disregard of either. It is as impossible as it would be to undertake a descent of the rain from heaven upon earth without the drops of water, the making small of which, for God's purposes of goodness, is adverted to as one of the proofs of that goodness.—Job xxxvi. 27.

A verbal inspiration, nothing less, may fairly be argued from Isa. lv. 8-11, and the reason for it. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but

watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

The author of that admirable book, "THE WISE MEN AND WHO THEY WERE," says most truly, "The *language* of Scripture is a *Fountain*, not a reservoir." The words have a meaning of life impalpable in the lexicon, which is the mere reservoir, built by human learning, by philology of dead languages, and can guide you to the life only by faithful references to the Fountain, but never by mere definitions cut off from the Infinite Mind. Therefore this writer well says, "In all Scripture there is a divine element of certainty; and for the full understanding of Scripture it is necessary to compare one part of it with another, *in a way that has no parallel in human writings.*" He has remarked with equal truth that "the historical element being the chief element, so far as form goes, in the Scriptures, there should be the same faith in the precision of their historical teaching, and the perfection of its relations, that there is in those of purely didactic Scripture."—See "Wise Men," etc., by F. W. Upham, LL.D.

## XVII.

THE SOURCES OF TRUE CRITICAL DISCERNMENT AND  
POWER—BENGEL AND HIS GNOMON.

Now inquiring what were the sources of such extraordinary discernment of the things of the Spirit in men like Bunyan, Howe, Luther, Bengel, Calvin, we may take first of all their discipline with this infallible Word of God in Christ. It was the reverential, believing study of the letter, with "praying in the Holy Ghost" for the teachings of the Spirit.

And there need be no other discovered source of blindness, weakness, and darkness over a whole generation, than when its students take their axioms of interpretation and their measures of evidence from men who absolutely disbelieve and deny the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the divine truth and authority of the Scriptures, and at length the very existence of Christ the Saviour, as revealed in the Word of God. Rejecting Him, all possibility of divine enlightenment in God's Word for our good is excluded.

Christ Himself must be the divine Interpreter of what He knew and declared to be the infallible written Word of God. Here is the source of all our certainty and power, over souls and against sceptics.



“The most important of all controversies,” said Bengel, speaking of the mental struggles undergone by him when studying the Bible on his knees, “are those we experience within us, of which there is no end till the whole mind has undergone a change, and the whole man has struggled into renovation. When this is done, a host of casuistical scruples disappear at once, and we soon get rid of the remainder.”

But if not, what then? Shall they shake our confidence? “The deepest difficulties,” said Arnold, “sitting hard by the most blessed truths, still, amidst all the doubts and perplexities of our own hearts, we must seek after the Lord, with unabated faith, if so be that we may find Him.” But before a confessed and unconquered difficulty, his mind reposed as quietly as in possession of a discovered truth. “What is that to thee? Follow thou me. And I know Christ to have been so wise and loving to men, that I am sure I may trust His word, and that what was entirely agreeable to His sense of justice and goodness can not, unless through my own defect, be otherwise than agreeable to mine.”

Bengel’s course for two years at Tubingen comprised the prescribed studies in exegesis, systematic divinity, Church history, and homilies, and the reading of the best works in all those branches. He read the Hebrew Bible and Greek Testament repeatedly

through, and along with them, several versions. In his twentieth year he was ordained, and threw himself into all the details of practical work among a common people, preaching, catechising, visiting, and found in these duties "a practical filter for drawing off the mud of his books from the water of life." In 1742 the *Gnomon* appeared, of which Michaelis himself said that it "exalted the author above all his predecessors in the critical knowledge of the New Testament." "It evinces," said another German critic, "the deepest reverence for the sacred text, and a most profound acquaintance with its contents. With remarkable simplicity and humility it follows the drift of the inspired meaning, and induces the soul to open itself even to the softest breathings of the Holy Ghost, which pervade the written word. Bengel weighed every clause, phrase, and word, to the minutest particle, and never lost a shade or fibre of thought which prayerful and painstaking study of the entire sacred text could disclose to him."

Passing through generation after generation of such experiments and proofs, the charge of bibliolatry against faith in what remains undemolished, falls to the ground. There is a Book of God, and we have it, as it came from Him, for our guidance. Every successive translation of the Scriptures, through the instrumentality of such scholars as have

been employed upon it, ought to have less and less of doubt. More of divine certainty it can not have, than that which God gave to the first transcribers. Being the words of the Saviour of the world for the life of the world, less and less of uncertainty should be the characteristic of every filtration of the Water of Life; and at the same time, depths deeper and deeper, till what was at first no higher than the ankles shall be a sea to swim in, that none can fathom. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

The book is our bridge from Time to Eternity. And God is His own Interpreter, as of His own Providence, and He will make it plain. Christ in the centre of it, holds all its fixtures, its certainties, in His own person; its chains pass through His heart. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of all mankind. The Book then is infallible for the human race, and in all languages. It must be so, or it is insufficient for any.

On earth, the best constructed bridges have to be tested, and it never can be told to a certainty that a pound's additional weight on this side or the other, or the disturbance of the balance by a foot measure, or the music of a stray fiddler, may not bring down the whole structure; a battalion of men with artillery, keeping step, might destroy it, after

millions have passed over it safely in confusion. But this is a bridge over which all the armies and artillery of the world may march in unison, with measured tramp. Whirlwinds can not move it; earthquakes will not shake its foundations. And God holds us to the belief of His truth by ringbolts of spiritual intuition in our own souls.

But why? Because we know that history is made up of opinion, assertion, supposition, and theory, by men but half informed, and always more or less prejudiced, but never inspired. These things may well make us suspicious and sceptical in regard to human testimony; but they only prove the necessity and the worth of that which is absolutely trustworthy, that which is divine. "I receive not testimony from man." Amazing declaration! All that philosophers and historians had written and taught Christ knew; and if there had been one divine voice among them all, would He not have referred to it? But He never spoke of Socrates or Plato, Zoroaster or Aristotle. Nor did He refer men to any testimony or writings on earth, but God's, by His inspiring Spirit. He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches. Having commanded us to hear, as for our life, what the Spirit saith, would He leave us in darkness, ignorance, uncertainty, as to such utterances?

How can we sufficiently thank God for the all-sufficiency and all-attainableness and commonness and we might say, cheapness of this light; for it is what the poor need, and can have without riches, and what the rich equally need, but can not buy. It is only, Come unto me. Not who shall ascend into the heavens, or descend into the depths, or search beyond the seas, but who will look unto me, the way, the truth, the life.

There is no evidence without that same coming to Christ, and beholding and knowing Him. All evidence and the utmost perfection of it, without this coming and beholding, is but darkness and condemnation. This is the condemnation of men, that this light of Christ is come into the world, but not admitted by men, because they loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. The disposition that rejects, and the guilty consciousness that hides, would be equally sure to falsify. Only a sincere and humble mind can receive condemnatory truth, and rejoice in it. Only such a mind can reflect it truly, can reproduce its loveliness and purity.

The reflection of the sky, the banks, the trees, the landscape, in a quiet transparent lake, how beautiful! But when the lake is agitated, and especially if it be muddy, there is either no reflection at all, or it is

broken into a chaos of images giving no impression of the beauty. What the mud or other impurities of the water are to its transparency, preventing the possibility of a just reflection, any habit of sin, any moral impurity in the soul would be to the power of reflection in that. There could be neither reception of the attributes of God, nor reflection of the divine image, by a soul torn with conflicting sinful passions. Does this truth cast us into despair? Self-despair, yes, but only that it may throw us upon Christ. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

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### XVIII.

HE THAT BELIEVETH NEED NOT MAKE HASTE—A  
QUIET UNCERTAINTY - INTERNAL EVIDENCE DECISIVE  
IN CASES OF DOUBT.

When the sea is out, the earth is fringed with shallows and mud-basins; ships can not cross the bars of the harbors, nor enter the inlets. But when the tide is full, all things are full of beauty and glory, and the design of all things is seen. And so with the Spirit in the heart, taking of the things that are

Christ's to show them to the soul. No man can see them without this flood of light, this tide of life, im-bathing, purifying, clarifying the perceptive and rea-soning faculties, for the inward beholding and experi-ence of divine things, and of the new birth, by which alone the kingdom of God can be seen. That which is born of the flesh is flesh. But the Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God. And for this very intuition there is promised and given the unction from the Holy One, by which we know all things.

Now for a man to undertake the criticism of divine truths, without this light, this inward heav-enly experience, is as if a man blind from his birth should set himself up to be a professor of the chem-istry of the sun's rays, a practical optician for eter-nity, and a scientific commentator on Newton and La Place.

Bishop Ellicott says, "The critical editor often fails to give a true statement of the actual case." "An exaggerated preference for a single manuscript which Tischendorf has had the good fortune to discover has betrayed him into an almost childlike infirmity of critical judgment." In three different editions of his Greek Testament there are pointed out twelve hun-dred and ninety-six variations from himself, by his own successive opinions.

Granville Penn said very aptly, in the case of a

proposed revision, "Trading convoys always regulate the progress of their fleet by the ability of the slowest sailor, however irksome the delay may be to the impatience of the swiftest movers; and that practice manifests the principle that ought to govern in the publication of a Book imparted for the welfare of the most simple, as much as for that of the most enlightened and sagacious."

The cautions of Bishop Ellicott, in his instructive and interesting "Essay on Revision of the English New Testament" are to be regarded, as to any attempt to construct, as yet, a new *Textus Receptus*. "Though we have much critical material, and a fair amount of critical knowledge, we have certainly not yet acquired sufficient critical judgment for any body of revisers hopefully to undertake such a work as this. All such attempts, whether on the part of individuals or general bodies, are indeed at present much to be deprecated as certainly premature, and as naturally tending to delay ultimate progress. We are steadily gravitating to a consent as regards a very considerable number of passages; let us not interfere with that natural process by trying to anticipate what we shall successfully arrive at, if we have but patience and industry."

There may be yet many more manuscripts discovered; it would be strange if there were not. "But



number alone can not be admitted for evidence in true criticism. If a thousand manuscripts are copied, one from the other, they do not increase the testimony of the first." Moreover, by omissions or contradictions among themselves, they do not diminish the authority, or invalidate the evidence, of the first.

"Dr. Johnson," says Boswell, "pointed out a paragraph in the sixty-fifth page of the first volume of Sir George Mackenzie, and told me there was an error in the text, which he bade me try to discover. I was lucky enough to hit it at once. As the passage is printed it is said, 'The devil answers *even* in engines.' I corrected, '*ever* in enigmas.' 'Sir,' said Dr. Johnson, 'you are a good critic; this would have been a great thing in the text of an ancient author.'" But what an error to occur in a *printed book*! And how wonderful that such errors are so infrequent in a thousand *manuscripts* of the Scriptures! We can better afford to wait, than to alter the text, or make it doubtful, even by the most ingenious conjectures, such as this of Johnson's biographer certainly was.

Meantime it is comforting to the unlearned reader of the Bible to know by very striking examples how often the most felicitous suppositions leave our English text just as good and satisfactory, with just as excellent a sense, whether we take one side or the other of the controversy.

No better example of this quieting uncertainty can be given than that which occurs in Acts xiii. 18, where the rendering of our English Version is as follows:

“And about the time of forty years suffered he their manners in the wilderness.” As it stands, it conveys a reproach and rebuke against the generation of their fathers, and an endurance of their obstinacy by God’s long-suffering. But in the margin the translators have noted the Greek word, *ἐτροποφορήσειν*, perhaps for *ἐτροφοφορήσειν*, *bore or fed them*, as a nurse beareth or feedeth her child; and the reference is to Deut. i. 31, “in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that the Lord thy God *bare thee*, as a man *doth bear his son*, in all the way that ye went.”

The object of the Apostle’s argument in the synagogue at Antioch is to persuade the Jews of the fulfilment of God’s ancient compassion and mercy to them according to His promise in raising up of David’s seed unto Israel, a Saviour, Jesus, even Him whom the rulers of the Jews had slain, but whom God had raised from the dead, and through whom “is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.” The object of Moses in Deut. i. 31, is likewise the encouragement of the people against their fears of the Amorites by reminding them how God *had borne them* and protected them all the way from Egypt, and *would*

*still do it*, if they would trust in Him and obey Him.

In this passage "we have," says Scrivener, "as nice a balance between conflicting readings (differing only by a single letter), as we find anywhere in the New Testament."—Introduction to Criticism of New Testament, page 537. Bloomfield in his notes on the passage, compares the evidence, so nicely balanced, between  $\pi$  and  $\varphi$ , and decides as Scrivener does, for  $\varphi$ , mainly by internal testimony, and the use of the word in Deut. i. 31.

The internal evidence is that which should be decisive in every case of doubt as to the external or merely textual.

But why? Because the external and the textual can be judged by scholarship merely; and the keenness of such judgment may be a qualification acquired by rote, and by familiarity with many codices of all ages. But the internal can be judged fully only by the Spirit of God, given in answer to prayer, and most efficacious and enlightening, just in proportion to the love and reverence of God's Word, habitual for years, and the earnestness and perseverance with which such divine aid and enlightenment have been sought at the mercy-seat in the name of Christ. "In thy light shall we see light."

The appeal therefore ought to be made to the com-

mon conscience of Christendom; and the verdict ought to be sought in the answer given after a long period of prayerful consideration. If it were asked how long the jury shall be out, it were not too much to say, Until a generation of scholars trained in familiar knowledge of the Greek and Hebrew languages shall have been placed in the jury box and consented, at least eleven out of twelve.

Perhaps it may be said, You would in this way never obtain a verdict. But you would at least gain such an accumulation and well known and considered weight of opinion, that at length the degree of contrariety would only operate as a confirmation of the truth. And forever the Word of the Lord might be settled on earth as in heaven.

It would, at any rate, be better to wait long, even through many generations, than cast out from the accepted text of God's Word any passage that belongs there; or that has in its favor the consent and desire of the spiritual belief of the most prayerful Christians in all ages, as being most fully consonant with the analogy of faith, and the practical tendency of God's Word. Such a witness of the Spirit is not to be despaired of, if it be diligently sought.

So it is the internal and textual combined, that make the perfect evidence. But the textual may be studied without the internal or spiritual, and there-

fore may leave the student in ignorance and helplessness. Milton's daughters could read to him Greek and Hebrew accurately, without one scintillation of the meaning.

The internal, the spiritual, may be perceived with no little ignorance of the textual; and where there is a devout sense of the meaning of the Spirit, even a translation may be wrought out with very little textual erudition or study, that shall be nearer to the divine original by far, than that which without such divine intuition proceeds from the most abundant supply of textual resources and the most learned use of the same. Such is the translation, originally the work of Tyndall; such ours in the present English Bible, the fruit of profound piety and spiritual attainments and sagacity, with sufficient skill and learning for the textual materials *then at hand*. The mind of the Spirit may be communed with, and the glory beheld, with little or no knowledge other than that of the plainest version, from even the poorest of the extant manuscripts. Paul's characteristic humility of mind and many prayers and tears are needed.

## XIX.

DEFENCE OF THE ANGELIC HYMN ON THESE  
PRINCIPLES.

“If there be one case,” says Scrivener (Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament, p. 513), “more prominent than another wherein solid reason and pure taste revolt against the iron yoke of ancient authorities, it is that of the angelic hymn sung at the Nativity.” In the common text and in our English Bible, he adds, “all is transparently clear,” and he sets the beautiful Hebrew hymn in its three lines, metrically,

“Glory to God in the highest,  
And on earth peace:  
Good will unto men.”

“The blessed words” are indeed full of divine proof that as they stand, so were they sung by the angels, so reported by the shepherds, so recorded by the inspiring Spirit of the record in Luke’s gospel.

The change proposed from *peace on earth*, which is the universal reign of the Prince of peace over our whole lost world, to that of peace on earth *to men of good will*, men of piety, by reading *εὐδοκίας* for *εὐδουαία*, is a limitation, or “yoke” put both

upon words and meaning; changing salvation as the gift of God to all sinners, into a proclamation of God's good will *only to good men*. Besides this, "the rhythmical arrangement is utterly marred, and the simple shepherds are sent away with a message, the diction of which no scholar has yet construed to his own mind."

Alford says that "peace on earth for those that will have it," is untenable in Greek as well as in theology; and peace on earth "among men of good pleasure" is unintelligible to most minds. And the reading "among men in whom He is well pleased" can be arrived at only through some process, which would make any phrase bear almost any meaning the translator might like to put upon it." Scrivener defends the hymn in the common text and our translation, by many uncial manuscripts, "and all the cursives; by the three extant Syriac versions, the Peshito most emphatically; and by the evidence of the Greek Fathers, supported by all the later manuscripts."

Here, the internal evidence of congruity with the truths of God's mercy and grace to the chief of sinners on earth, through the incarnation and merits of Christ the Redeemer, and not through men of good pleasure, or the pleasure of good men, or a good disposition, inviting or claiming God's mercy, seems quite enough to decide the interpretation. It

is not only solid reason and pure taste against the yoke of ancient authorities, but it is the analogy of faith, supported, on the whole, by the most ancient authority, which takes the soul of the sinner immediately to Christ. *Peace to men of good will* is not accordant with the presentation, universal elsewhere, of peace to the guilty, the rebellious, the lost by an evil will, the children of wrath, alienated from God and at enmity against Him. These are not men of good will, but all mankind by nature; and if the salutation of the angels was so restricted, Paul himself, above all other men, could have no part in it; the blasphemer of Christ, the murderer, the persecutor of believing souls unto death, through hatred of Christ's name.

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## XX.

DEFENCE OF THE DOXOLOGY IN OUR LORD'S  
PRAYER BY THE SAME EVIDENCE.

A similar example of the power of internal evidence, by comparison of the whole context with the very earliest authorities, is to be found in behalf of the doxology to our Lord's prayer, as it stands in the received text of the Gospel according to Matthew. The place of the prayer in Matthew is immediately



after the temptation in the wilderness, and the results of that temptation, the lessons derived from it are embodied in our Lord's sermon on the mount.

The experience of the Lord Jesus, in His own conflict with Satan, is there in that discourse, put into warnings, encouragements, and instructions, for the whole tempted world, and for His disciples to the end of Time; for prayer, for trust in God, for deliverance from anxiety and hypocrisy, for singleness and simplicity of service towards God, for protection from temptation, and from the master of temptation, the great adversary of souls. *Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the EVIL ONE.*

And in reference to the incredible daring of the tempter, promising *all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them*, to such as would serve him, the opening of the Lord's prayer, *THY KINGDOM come, THY WILL BE DONE, ON earth as in heaven; God only to be worshipped, loved, and served.* And then the close, *FOR THINE is the KINGDOM, THE POWER, AND THE GLORY, forever.* If you ever need any proof that this doxology, which some have attempted to sever from this prayer, was our Lord's own portion of it, look back to His conflict with Satan, and you will know that this also grew out of the devil's own assault and claim; and was set by divine inspiration as part of the divine prayer for the piety of all believers.

Angels came and ministered unto Him. They were again ministering in the Garden of Gethsemane. The Son of God was seen of angels in the extremities of the sufferings endured for us, that He might, through death, destroy him that had the power of death, even the devil.

It is the *Author and Finisher of faith* face to face with the murderer of souls; sinking the pillars of the spiritual universe deep in His own sufferings. In the very outset bringing out the awful and eternal reality of truths which will always be denied by compounds of science and sense and sin in this world; even the very existence of a devil, delighting forever in evil, and the character of sinful men as the children of Satan, and the everlastingness of death and life as the issues of obedience or disobedience to God's commands.

If example or origin of this doxology were needed in the Old Testament, it is found in the glorious consecrating prayer and blessing pronounced by David before all the congregation, when his gifts were publicly consecrated to God for the building of the Temple. "Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel our Father, for ever and ever. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all."

Olshausen says, "The doxology is wanting in many manuscripts, as shown by Griesbach. But it occurs already in the Peshito, where, however, *it may be an interpolation.*"

*It may be;* but what shadow of authority is there for such a conjecture? Alford adds the affirmation, "that we find *absolutely no trace* of the doxology in early times, in any family of MSS., or in exposition." Yet, in the very next sentence he adds, "*The Peshito has it*, but whether it always had, is *another question.*" But *whose* is the question, and by what authority? The Peshito Version is a very satisfactory trace, *absolutely more than a trace* of the existence of these words, in the very earliest known version of the earliest manuscript ever referred to.

In the earliest century in which we have any traces of the gospels at all this doxology is known. Bloomfield says "it is supported by the Syriac and some other Oriental versions and by some of the Greek Fathers." "The Sahidic, Ethiopic, Armenian, Gothic, and Gregorian Versions contain it, and nearly all the five hundred cursive manuscripts containing Matthew's sixth chapter." Chrysostom comments upon it without the least consciousness that its authenticity is doubtful.

Scrivener remarks that "if it is probable that the doxology was interpolated from the liturgies, it is

just as probable that it was cast out of Matthew's gospel to bring it into harmony with Luke's." "The Syriac and Thebaic Versions bring up the existence of the doxology to the second century. Isidore, Chrysostom, and perhaps others, attest it for the fourth; and so do nearly all the later documents; so that we may be excused for regarding the indictment against the last clause of the Lord's prayer as hitherto *unproven*."

This is a valuable testimony from one of the profoundest and most accurate of the critics thus far known, F. H. Scrivener, in his Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament, pp. 496, 497, 2d Edition.

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## XXI.

SCEPTICISM THE WORK OF MISINTERPRETATION AND MISTAKE; INSTANCED IN THE CASE OF COLENSO—NO WORD FOR SLAVE IN THE HEBREW LANGUAGE.

Dr. S. P. Tregelles, in the preface to his work on the printed text of the New Testament, enumerates the classes of sceptics,—accusing, distorting, argumentative, rationalistic, mythic, liberal, Christianizing without Christ, and pretenders to a divine teaching without acknowledging an inspiring Holy Spirit;—"successive, rival, and mutually antagonis-

tic rulers of the Olympus of scepticism and infidelity;"—in one thing and only one agreeing, through all forms of opposition, namely, all of them re-echoing the serpent's first whisper of doubt and lying, "YEA, HATH GOD SAID?"

He adds that "Holy Scripture, being our Chart of Redemption through the Saviour's blood, we therefore are able to estimate the importance of Textual Criticism, by which we know on grounds of ascertained certainty, *the actual words and sentences of that charter, in the terms in which the Holy Ghost gave it.*"

A verbal inspiration is here rightfully presupposed in the terms of a charter of human salvation. This presupposition includes that of an equally sure, plenary, and certain inspiration in the Old Testament Scriptures, prophetic, historical, doctrinal.

Dean Alford affirms, in a note on John xii. 32, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me," that there is a *fine touch of pathos*, corresponding with the feeling of verse 27, *now is my soul troubled*, in ἐὰν ὑψωθῶ. The Lord Jesus, though *knowing all this*, yet in the weakness of His humanity *puts Himself into this seeming doubt*, if it is so to be, as in Matt. xxvi. 42. "*All this is missed*," continues Alford, "by the *shallow and unscholarlike rendering, when; which*, I need hardly remind my readers, *ἐὰν can never bear.*" That is, all this *pathos*

of *uncertainty* in regard to the very manner of our Lord's death, *as foreseen by Him*, and immediately remarked upon, in verse 33, "This He said, *signifying what death He should die:*" not what death He *might* die, but, ἤμελλεν αποθνήσκειν, *must* die, ought, should, must, therefore certain.

Now the student of New Testament Greek, turning to Dr. Robinson's Lexicon, for the whole force of this particle *ἐὰν*, finds it exhibited thus, besides the classical usage, so well known; namely, as a Hebraism,  $\square$ , passing over into a particle of time, referring to an event, certain in itself, but uncertain in time, *when, whenever*; put with the subjunctive aorist, and followed by an indicative future. John xii. 32, instanced also in I John iii. 2, "We know that *when, ἐὰν*, He shall appear, we shall be like Him." Similarly, III John 10, *ἐὰν ἔλθω*, "*when* I come." Also John xiv. 3, "If I go, and prepare a place for you;" *ἐὰν*, "*when* I go," the present in a future certainty. So, the Sept. Prov. iii. 24, and Isa. xxiv. 13, "Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble; *when* thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid. Be not afraid of sudden fear, *when* it cometh."—Prov. iii. 24. "*When* the vintage is done."—Isa. xxiv. 13.

"And it came to pass, *when* they had made an end of eating," etc.—Amos vii. 2.

So impossible is it always to determine the thought, or to prevent "*missing the whole meaning,*" in the New Testament Greek, except by accurate study of the words, both in Hebrew and Greek. These instances are undeniable; and they show how the genius of the two languages has to be consulted, in order fully to understand even the particles of either; and how even a profound scholar may be betrayed into inaccuracies, by mere classical deductions, as if they covered the whole ground.

Perhaps no commentator on the Scriptures has more faithfully, or with more accurate industry represented the capacities of the Hebrew and Greek particles than Prof. Stuart in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Commenting on Hebrews iii. 7, he adds to the instances given above, of the use of *ἐάν*, *when*, like the Hebrew *אם*, to which it corresponds, the cases of John vi. 62, and xiii. 20.—See also Bloomfield on the same, *ἐάν* for *ὅταν*.

And Prof. Stuart has constructed an argument for Paul's authorship of this Epistle, "with a result so plain that it can not be mistaken," by comparison of the usage of words in this Epistle with that in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, which has never been doubted as the writing of the same Apostle.

These things do certainly go far to prove the ne-

cessity and reality of a verbal inspiration, if any at all be admitted. Language must be used and interpreted according to its national and local habits and laws.

Plainly, all evidence of importance may be so entirely dependent on the usage, repetition, or absence, of a particular verbal phraseology, as to compel the admission of a verbal inspiration, if infallible results are to be secured.

Consulting the Septuagint of the Old Testament, we have to go by lead and line in Hebrew and Greek for the meaning of the New.

It is by neglecting this canon that so many interpreters have erred in not giving the word *δοῦλος* in the New Testament the benefit of the celestial baptism derived from the spirit of freedom in the Old. Hence we have the prodigious anomaly of such expressions as the *slaves of Christ*, applied to His ministers of truth, whom He would never permit to be called slaves, but friends; even as the return of the Prodigal Son was not permitted to be announced as the subjection of a *chattel* or bondsman, but in the penitential prayer, "Make me as one of thine hired servants."

Certainly, if upon the articles and prepositions, moods and tenses of the grammar of a language conclusions have to be built so vitally affecting our



views of the manners and morals of a people, and the nature of their appointed discipline of character and retribution, a verbal inspiration would seem absolutely necessary for the understanding both of God's righteousness and man's responsibility.

Conybeare and Howson go so far as to say, in Gal. v. 13, "*Ye have been called unto freedom; ENSLAVE YOURSELVES one to another.*" Such a translation of δουλείετε could never have been considered admissible, if the genius of the Hebrew had been consulted and followed.

There is no word in the Hebrew language for *slave*, and this grand fact speaks volumes. It goes far to prove that the Hebrew must have begun with Eden, as the dialect of freedom and of Paradise. The glorious necessity and penury of that divine language in this respect (a penury the consequence of wealth) dragged in triumph the Greek words, which human depravity had applied for slavery, and made a show of them openly, having bound them to the service of a universal and Christian freedom. In the work of translation, for want of another pure language that had not been created out of despotism and servility, the Greek words for *service*, though stamped with the superscription of *slavery*, had to be taken as the exponents of the noble Hebrew. But the grand old Hebrew significance held on and triumphed, being at

length additionally elevated and transfigured by the gospel.

The Greek was not laid aside, nor unclothed, but clothed upon, with the divineness of the Hebrew; and the words that are thus transfigured must be viewed as reflecting the glory of that Redeemer, whose incarnation, death, and work of redemption gathered all mankind into one free family. To look at them otherwise, in their usage in the New Testament, would be as if one of the disciples could have stripped Moses and Elias of their glory, and compelled them to appear in their earthly and mortal habiliments. There is no exaggeration in this. If any man will examine carefully the works of those scholars who have written on the principles of interpretation as applied to the Greek of the New Testament, he will find that though this particular view might not have been in the mind of those writers, yet the demonstration is inevitable from their principles.\*

We have quoted the two preceding paragraphs

\* See Saalschutz, "Mosaic System of Laws," Vol. 2, ch. 101, pp. 697-714, Berlin, 1846; Seiler, "Biblical Hermeneutics," Part 2, Sec. 242; Winer, "Grammar of Idioms of the Greek Language of the N. T.," pp. 31, 31; Plenck, "Greek Diction of N. T.;" Robinson, "Philology of N. T.;" Tholuck, "Lexicography, N. T.;" "Tittmann on Forced Interpretations;" "Marsh's Lectures," p. 3, Lec. 14; Lightfoot, "Works," Vol. 4, p. 31.

from a volume of our own, on "The Guilt of Slavery, and the Crime of Slaveholding as Demonstrated from the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures"; published in New York in 1860. But it then had to be published without a publisher; for so great was the heat of the conflict, that no publisher could be found willing to undertake it. Now that the whirlwind and the storm have passed, the truth against slavery is as clear as the sun at noonday, both in the Bible and in our own political constitution.

It was a radical misinterpretation and mistake of the Hebrew and its context (preassuming falsely the existence and sanction of chattel slavery), in Ex. xxi. 20, 21, that plunged Bishop Colenso and his Zulu hearers into such a sea of doubt, from which he emerged only by denying the historical veracity of the Pentateuch, and proclaiming Exodus an imposture, and Moses a forger of God's Word, who dared affix to the imaginations of his own brain, the assertion, *Thus saith the Lord*. So remarkable an instance of this kind of teaching among savages by a missionary, is sadly instructive as to the necessity of being rooted and grounded in the knowledge of languages and history, as well as in the love of Christ that passeth knowledge.

This treatment of Moses by Colenso followed hard upon that of the whole Pentateuch by Ewald in Ger-

many, and Kuenen in Holland; and their destructive criticism, with that of Renan and Strauss, is now imitated and repeated, borrowed, and applied with endorsements of successive professed experts, not in transitory volumes merely, but in weighty encyclopedias, under the assumption of established science. It is none the less a continued reverberation of theories, conjectures and accusations, without valid reason, and unsupported by facts.

There is such a thing as *binding* a stone in a sling (Prov. xxvi. 8), fastening, chaining it, as master of the sling instead of its winged minister, so that it can not shoot, in free and airy flight, as the will and faith of a David against Goliath, for God's cause, but is used as a slung-shot for private assassination. So do men imprison the truth in unrighteousness (Rom. i. 18), and professing themselves to be wise become fools. Denying God's inspiration, they say of the divine Word, "He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye Him?" Instead of planting arrows in the heart of the King's enemies, to subdue the people under Him, they strike at the King Himself and His disciples. Their words are shot as the darts of the Wicked One, tipped with fire, and barbed to work the gangrene of doubt and anguish in tempted souls; — words that eat as doth a canker (II Tim. ii. 17), scorners' words, of fire-brands, arrows, and death.

But men of all parties too often employ the screw, the vice, the Procrustes' bed, upon the Scriptures, instead of sincere, free inquiry, and "the gentleness of Christ." The use of *the question* became by papal despotism a synonym for the torture of the Inquisition. That was diabolical. Rationalism takes the veil. A meaning is first imposed upon the text, and that preassumed meaning is then reasoned from as a postulate. The examples are numerous and startling of such a perversion, fossilization, and despotism of thought and opinion through the forcing and chain-ganging of words. The marine impressment of landsmen for sailors is a light iniquity compared with this. Alas, men often employ language for knocking down, instead of persuading; and they who split hairs in controversy end with splitting heads.

But human language, inbreathed and adopted by the Holy Spirit, becomes everywhere an infallible, loving, divine inspiration, human *and* divine, consecrated and kept by the same affectionate baptism that is described by Paul as "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, setting us free from the law of sin and death," the very spirit of adoption, *υιοθεσία*, *sonship*, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The words and thoughts of our Heavenly Father are themselves children of light, full, everywhere, of merciful convictions for the conscience.

and heavenly invitations and promises, and windows of God's light and love. For all the *warnings* in regard to the reality of an *eternal death* are no less the work and certainty of love, than are the assurances of *eternal life*. And it is this quality of ETERNITY that gives at once its infinite value to the revelation, and the rule of its just interpretation, and the demonstration of its infallibility. All these things meet in the divine personality of Jesus Christ, the Author and Finisher of Faith, the Way, the Truth, the Life, the Resurrection and the Life, Yesterday, To-day, and Forever

The personal eternity of God, belonging to all His attributes, is to us the Reason of His Revelation to mankind by inspiration; and the same personality determines our rule for the interpretation of that whole revelation. Divine love, in and for the redemption of sinful men (to seek and save the lost) is God's revealed reason; the disclosed fact, method and necessity of that redemption are our *rule*, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. The rule is to be determined and applied, in and for the interpretation of the words, not as an expedient for a present emergency, but according to the reason and in obedience to that, as covering the whole ground of divine revelation. As an example from human jurisprudence, interpreting laws and applying them,

we take our own Constitution, a document of equity and freedom. Every *rule* in it is to be determined in its application by the *reason* of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Most men go by rule of habit, emergency, and ultimate necessity; few by reason. This is the cause for improvements being so few and so gradual. With most men the rule is a rut worn so deep that the wheels of life are in it, almost to the hub.

When the reason is the RULE, it is the cheapest, simplest, and harmonizes all things. When the rule is the reason, there can be nothing but conflict and confusion, till the reason becomes supreme.

When all the lines from the circumference of a circle run to the centre, they all run straight, and without crossing. In order that they may run without crossing, they must all run to that one point. God in Christ is our Centre; and without Him, and a submissive reference of all things, purposes, and meanings to His known will, we are the offspring of darkness and despair.

## XXII.

## GOD'S RIGHT OF PREPOSSESSION IN THE HUMAN MIND.

If God is the God and Father of the spirits of all flesh, and all souls are His, it is absolutely certain that He will teach them what is for their good, and nothing that is false or injurious. Plato's natural theology taught as much as that.

Again, if God is a Father, He will teach His children nothing in His Word that is contrary to His teaching in His works; nothing in the new creation contrary to His law in the old; nothing in revealed theology contrary to what we call natural.

And since His Word *to* man comes after His creation *of* man, there can be nothing of God's testimony in the Word contradicting what can be proved to have been God's testimony in His works. Science never has discovered, and never can, any thing in God's works contrary to God's Scriptures.

But, as the universe of God's works requires both a telescopic and microscopic intelligence and investigation, so does that of His Word, with a full faith that both the large and the little are equally from God, and known unto Him; the letters and words as well as the sentences. It is right and just in God as our Father to require that His children should believe



what He speaks for their good. It is not an imposition upon man, nor an arbitrary exaction, any more than with the angels, nor any restraint upon the freedom of his reason; but it belongs to the security and perfection of all reason, it is the very atmosphere of human reason, the perfect freedom of its exercise, the element of liberty and strength. The gift of a divine revelation being the highest privilege and rightful heritage of man; the right to believe in it and act accordingly, from his birth, is his property, his prerogative, his happiness, his duty, his life, as an intelligent, free, immortal being.

Whatever, on fair and full examination, with prayer to our Heavenly Father for light, possesses sufficient proof to human reason for belief in it as the truth of God for our guidance, has the first and highest claim. It is God's *inevitable* claim of prepossession in the opinions and beliefs of the beings He has framed for their own happiness, to love and trust and worship Him. His revelation of Himself to man, and the capacity and freedom of communion with his Maker, began with the hour of his creation, and the freedom of saying, Our Father. And the word *Creator* comprehends every thing of duty and guidance and blessedness following in a divine revelation.

Now, inasmuch as the ground of human education must be preoccupied with something, shall fallen

man write the first page, or shall the Saviour of the world? Which power shall have first possession,—belief or unbelief? For it has come to this, that there can be no middle ground. If you reject the Bible, it is not a serene impartiality, that takes possession, but an assumption of the non-divinity, the falsehood, the unrectitude and absolute forgery, of divine truth. It is an accusation, at the very least, of an illegal, unauthorized, squatter sovereignty; and over the threshold of the homestead of the tenant hangs a writ of dispossession and ejection.

Divine truth is God's right of prepossession; but scientific conceit, Rationalism, the Higher Criticism, so called, and a secular education, make such blessed prepossession an impossibility. For the very being of God is put by this philosophy of sense at the mercy of the creatures of His wisdom and power, as requiring a personal experience of creation itself, on the ground that otherwise the proof of design is impossible, and all evidence of any past communion of God with the human race equally impossible, and all proof of any future existence doubtful, and much more all assurance of what certainties may be before us in that future state. For all these things an anchorage for our souls is necessary in that very certainty, governing all known truth, in which Christ's own existence had its anchorage and its ruling, namely

an infallible divine revelation, the axiom and gravitating centre of which for all ages, from God and to God is just this, IT IS WRITTEN. Making that which Huxley, and a host of imitators have affirmed to be bibliolatry, our only security for the worship of God in spirit and in truth, through Him, and His example, who is the Way, the Truth, the Life.

The whole of God's revelation must be truth and doctrine, taught by God's authority, from the very beginning. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Pure assertion, but divine instruction, every word of it, every thought in it; not one iota of proof by human witnesses or science. How could there be? Who was there to see, except it had been the atavistic ghost of Professors Huxley or Tyndall, beholding, out of the prepotency of matter, this fair creation rising. But who created and prepared *them* to behold? The insanity of the demand for proof is equalled only by the moral delirium that denies a Creator, because the creature could not see and bear witness, as an expert, to the fact of himself coming into existence at the word of an Almighty Being, already visible to an eye and a reasoning mind, itself not yet created! What a concentration of insanities, labelled as science, before which the demonstrations of Christianity must be withdrawn, as wanting evidence to the senses!

## XXIII.

GOD'S METHOD OF A PREPOSSESSING LOVE IN THE  
HUMAN CONSCIENCE.

We have said that a prepossession of the conscience by God's truth is God's right as our Creator and Educator, the teacher of our immortality, and of our eternal responsibility to Himself. It is also the wisdom and safety of the creature to be prepossessed by God, and to have His truth grow in us and with us as our life, as its inspiring and guiding principle. "Concerning the works of men, by the word of Thy lips, I have kept me from the paths of the Destroyer." This is the rule of thought, feeling and active life propounded in that wise and beautiful little gem of George Herbert's poetry, entitled "The Elixir":

“Teach me, my God and King,  
In all things Thee to see;  
And what I do in any thing,  
To do it as for Thee.

“Not rudely, as a beast,  
To run into an action;  
But still to make Thee prepossess,  
And give it Thy perfection.”

It is the characteristic of secularism to run, by

its very axioms, in the matter of education, as far off as possible from God. The secularists are indefatigable to protect the children from religion as an intruder and despot. Christ is required to depart out of their coasts, as though the children were a consecrated possession of the god of this world, without the least right of inheritance in the knowledge of another. Sometimes it is as if the terror were on them of being turned by religion into swine.

God's method is that of prepossessing and preventing love. Let Thy tender mercies speedily prevent us. Thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness. This is God's merciful care for our immortal natures, forewarning us whom we should fear; also He hath set eternity and the sense of it in their hearts, so fearfully and wonderfully are we made; has sunk the foundations of His everlasting authority in the constitution of the soul, and fastened "prevention bolts" for protection of the working of the conscience towards Him. So that, if men but choose to avail themselves of these advantages in the work of education, it is God's mortgage on His own property, made over to the teachers of God's truth, for foreclosure on every generation.

Such prepossession of the whole being is God's right and man's happiness. Otherwise, the ground

not pre-empted and possessed by God's authority will be invaded by Satan, who provides for seven devils, and the last state of that man is worse than the first. He undertook the first scheme of secular education in Eden.

“Him there they found  
Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve.”

And now, where God is not, the serpent is, in heart and mind. And as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he, and such is his development. For the principles of heart, mind, character, are there at the foundation, and the whole house of our being is not only raised upon them as a superstructure, but grows out of them with a life and energy derived from them. If we are children of God we are rooted and grounded in Christ and in His love, and speaking the truth in love, we grow up into Him in all things. We are also builded together in Him, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord, in whom we are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. All this from the prepossession of God's acre by roots and principles in Christ, by grace and truth in Him from the beginning, from childhood to manhood, in the knowledge of the Son of God.

This is God's divine education in us, with us, for us, that every man may be presented perfect in Christ Jesus, that we be no more children tossed to and fro, as foundlings in Satan's almshouse, and "carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness," but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily, that we may be complete in Him, being filled by the knowledge of His love with all the fulness of God. These wonderful expressions, and these combinations and comminglings of figures, are but shadows of the glory of that infinitely blissful, life-giving education in Christ, which God hath devised for us and put in practice upon us in the powerful attractions of the gospel, having so learned Christ as to be created anew in His image. The Holy Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, the divine consciousness and the human in this regeneration at length becoming one and the same.

Prevention is better than cure, and prepossession is *preposition*, and if held as firmly as taken, secures the victory. Preposition is power; and prepossession in a right way, by the elements of truth, is not only nine-tenths of the law, but, in divine love, is

the whole law. Let any man take a comprehensive dictionary of any language, the English especially, with the references and illustrative quotations, and he can read no more solemn and profoundly instructive pages, even in the most sacred moralists, than he can in tracing the words compounded with the governing particles *pre* and *pro*. From pre-accusation (the very first compound noun occurring in this form, and for the consciousness of guilt how significant!) down through pre-admonition, precaution, preception, predilection, predisposition, pre-emption, pre-judication, and so on, to the last of the alphabet, presentiment, presumption, pretension, prevention, prevision. Forewarned, forearmed. "Prevenient grace descending," builds lighthouses in our very language for us, foreseeing, foretelling our dangers, our refuges, the reefs, the shoals, the harbors. Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him.

Prepossession waits on preposition; the last is first, the first follows and holds. So it is with right principles, taking the highest positions and confirmed by habits. In our War of Independence, Ticonderoga was fortified by the Americans. They had prepossession. But to have secured that, to have held it against the enemy, there should have been preposition, higher up, not only of that fort, but of ev-



ery other higher eminence, from which an enemy, having prepossessed that height, could overlook, overshoot, and dispossess the other. And so the native-born patriots had to move out. It is the warning lesson for a right education, a right beginning, a granite foundation.

There must be prepossession in some way, and that way ought to be the truth. When once the truth is discovered, every new soul brought into life ought to be preoccupied with that certainty of truth, and not with doubt or falsehood. The right system of the heavens having been discovered, every child ought to be prepossessed with that knowledge, and not with ignorance or darkness, or the old Ptolemaic system. And so, above all, in religion. The highest fort nearest heaven ought to be taken. And it certainly belongs to God. To whom else? If there be a God, *that* knowledge ought to be a prepossession. And if there be a divine revelation, a disclosure and command from God as to our duty and His worship, our life and happiness in Him, *that* also ought to be a prepossession. But if there be a God, the Creator and Father of mankind, there *must have been* a revelation; for reason re-affirms what revelation announces, as a cardinal position for the soul, that "good and upright is the Lord, therefore will He teach sinners in the way." Men could not have lived six thousand

years, or as some of "the scientists" affirm, sixty thousand or a million, without God revealing Himself.

But from the first moment of God becoming known by divine revelation, there must be that prepossession in the soul by the knowledge of God, and by faith in Him, or the man is no longer a rational creature, but a beast. A rational creature, without a prepossession in behalf of God, is a brute without the excuse of the brute's ignorance.

There must be opinions that are organic growths and meant to stand and serve like the teeth for the preparation of our daily food, like the gastric juice for digestion. Opinions that grind up a multiplicity of facts and thoughts, reducing them to a condition fit for swallowing and assimilation. Of such a nature is the inherited conviction of the divine inspiration of the Bible as the Word of God; a conviction or belief without which the mind is as a ship at sea, dismasted, rudderless, the sport of winds and waves, the compass useless. Whenever the south wind blows softly, men are very apt to suppose they have obtained their purpose, but when neither sun nor stars in many days appear, and the ship can not bear up into the wind, but must be let drive before it, and you can get no observations, nor take reckoning, but are as a cloud carried with a tempest, what is to be done? This is just the condition of many minds on the

ocean of immortality. They have no compass; they did not take it on board at the beginning of the voyage; not a single league of their path has ever been guided by it.

Now, have the children of the State no right to a compass for their immortality, or, can that safeguard be justly forbidden in any school? Have the children no rights of such prepossession from God? Are we not guardians for them in this inheritance? "*Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not.*" Shall the State be permitted to step in between them and Christ, to hide His face, His light, His truth, from them; to send them forth into the world with every other provision except that one only, which all human experience has taught to be necessary? Shall that one safeguard of character be forbidden,—the conscience towards God, and the knowledge of a Saviour's love? Can the people convey to the State, as their trustees, the power of such an immolation of the children on the altar of Secularism? Is there any right, even in the sincerest infidelity, to make such submission of their character, their principles, to the god of this world, for him to write his image and superscription on them?

"Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not," is the central law of God in Christ

for the education of mankind; and He has given to our States and towns in America the opportunities and advantages of trying this divine experiment on such a scale, and with such security, as no other nation has ever yet possessed. The law of such education is as comprehensive and binding as the golden law of love.

Hold a child's mind up to Christ in the arms of faith and prayer, and God, by His Spirit, will photograph the face of Christ upon it and within it, and it shall grow in His likeness. A knowledge of the gospels will do this, and it is impossible to tell how little of this light God may bless, or what multitudes may have Christ formed within them the hope of glory, even through the apparently insignificant and brief instrumentality of only five minutes' acknowledgment of God daily in the reading of the Lord's Prayer, and any one verse or version of Christ's invitations to the soul. But not if you conceal the gospel. Not if you shut all knowledge of Christ and prayer out of the school. Not if you prepossess the child's mind with the maxims of this world, and a worldly morality only. Not if you keep the child in ignorance of the very existence and mercy of a Saviour, on the pretence that a single unbelieving conscience has the right to exclude all such knowledge from the school.

XXIV & XXV.

METHOD OF THE DESTRUCTIVES.

Every one of these principles, and even the power of God to make an infallible revelation, is denied by various classes of sceptics; and the very assertion of the duty of belief in God and His Word, and of the wrongfulness of unbelief is affirmed to be a theological intolerance, an act of bigotry, a persecution of the human mind, and a barrier against the discoveries of science in the globe, and of truth in history. This is the argument of Prof. Huxley's frequent consecrations of *doubt* as a governing scientific principle, and his sarcasms and contempt of justification by *faith* as a *revealed* principle; and in like manner Mr. Russell Martineau's assertion of Hebrew history, as beginning, because all other histories do, "with mythic Heroes, at a time when the Gods themselves were imagined to people the earth with their kind." This is the argument of his Translation and commendation of "Ewald's History of Israel," namely, that as all human histories have their beginning in fables, legends, falsehoods of tradition, therefore, if any thing is called or deemed a divine history, it must have begun with the same, and can not be divine.

“Hebrew tradition,” says Ewald (vol. i. p. 41), “on whatever stage it introduces the Deity, acting and incarnating itself in history, is always mythic on those occasions; and it is of no use to deny that in this it approaches the style and nature of heathen mythologies.” So, the very foundation of Ewald’s History includes a primal denial of God’s inspiration of the Hebrew Scriptures. It begins with the arbitrary dislocation and breaking up of those Scriptures, and then proceeds with conjectures and assumptions of certainty in uninspired imaginary “books of origins,” and selected fragments and traces of traditions, with *guiding analogies* adopted from the mythical legends and fabulous beginnings of all nations; and so builds up a mere human history, that is to take the place of belief in the Scriptures, *their inspiration* being first exorcised as a falsehood.

The work of Kœenen at Leyden, on the “Religion of Israel to the Fall of the Jewish State,” is still more destructive, extreme, and sweeping in its infidelity, but on the same grounds. The false prophets of Judah live over again. First, “they have belied the Lord, and said, It is not He.” Then, with array of stupendous learning, they reason from their own erudite myths and ghosts of imaginary books and authors, by which, with assumed dates and traditions, they undertake to build up their compound

reconstructions of a Bible of their own, to be imposed upon men's credulity by their own authority, instead of the Hebrew Scriptures. And so, as of old, "from the prophets of the deceit of their own hearts they speak a vision not out of the mouth of the Lord; dreams, which they tell every man to his neighbor, causing the people to err by their lies and their lightness; so that profaneness is gone forth into all the land."

The description in Jer. xxiii. is of "*a horrible thing*"; yet it is renewed to-day in such works as these of Ewald and Kuenen, Colenso and Renan; and it is affirmed that "the mythical system, as understood and wielded by *its chief masters*, is any thing but destructive of history, and rather *makes a history* where before there was *none*."

It invents an enormous and demoralizing forgery, continued and connived at through more than a thousand years, and then endows that forgery with a new-creating sanctifying life and power, denied to have ever existed in God's truth, or come from heaven. A falsehood is installed as the omnipotent deity of Hebrew history, and we are commended to its results in the piety of Josiah, as a proof of the sublime genius of its author!

The regeneration of a whole kingdom and people, and their being instantly brought back from idolatry

to God's pure worship, through the efficacy of a forged law-book, by an unknown author, without a single proof or authentication, and by a conspiracy of priests, is a miracle, that only Ewald's rational credulity, denying all divine inspiration, could digest. Yet this is the purified and restored history of Israel. "All exegesis," says Havernick, "which bids such defiance to all the rules of sound hermeneutics, and supposes a concerted scheme of forgery, such as was affirmed by De Wette, is indeed undeserving of any further refutation."—See Havernick on the Pentateuch, Sec. 28-35. And compare Stillingfleet, "Origines Sacre," Vol. I, Book 2, on the impossibility of a forgery of the Laws of Moses.

There is no possibility of a history of the Jewish people and church without the Old Testament Scriptures.

Now then, if we take those Scriptures as history at all, or the *foundation* of history, *we have to build upon what they record*, as originating facts and principles. We can not turn out the living soul, and put in place of it an automaton chess-player of our own construction, and call *that* history. We can not exorcise a divine inspiration from the characters and their biographies, as if the reality were a demon, and the record of it a falsehood, and then proceed to manufacture a history out of our own supposi-



tion, conjecture, and sagacity, instead of *that which testifies in the Hebrew books*. There is no history to deal with, nor any that can be constructed, without admitting a divine inspiration, and tracing its work. For it is that which has created and preserved the nation, and any treatment of the history without that is unhistorical and false. It is that, and only that, which has produced and maintained all the influence of the nation, and of its history, over other nations, and has connected its history with Christianity, as the vertebræ of the human frame are connected with, and govern, the whole development of the perfect human being, body, soul, and spirit.

For the history is in the ideas, and the ideas are in the history, its grasping and assimilating life, the very power and method of God's manifestation, and the connection and progress from the beginning, till in Christ "the life is manifested," and in Him the Jewish history expands into the Christian, whose eye witnesses and Christ—inspired recorders "bear witness, and show unto us that Eternal Life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto them." The whole of modern history, from that era is only a huge myth and mist, except the history of the Jewish nation and church be accepted as true, with God in it. If men can make God a liar in His own revelation of His own providential and spiritual work,

there is no God, and what men call history, or pretend to have accurately filtered out of divine falsehood, is nothing but a compound of atheism and lying. "If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out?" By whom do Ewald, Kuenen and Colenso cast out Moses as a devil, and install the dagon of their own invention as deities of their own reconstructed Bible?

This treatment of the history of the Jewish church is unhistorical, even supposing the Scriptural records were merely human, and to be dealt with as such. For if you deal with these books as mere ordinary uninspired literature, such as the early histories of Greece and Rome, you are bound to note what is actually in them, what they testify in regard to God, and His purposes, interpositions, teachings, and discipline; you are bound to state all this in full, and to show what it really is in the histories; making a people under God's supernatural, providential and spiritual training. You are at liberty, indeed, after relating all this, to say as atheists, if you choose, that this was mere fanaticism or superstition, and that God never was thus present, manifesting Himself to these Jews, and teaching them and providing for their spiritual as well as temporal needs, and making them a peculiar people by covenant miracles and grace. You are free to blaspheme, if you will.

But the real history of the people is one of God's presence among them, and dealings with them, and acknowledged sovereignty over them, and of divine ideas and potencies, constituting all their truth, heroism, and superiority. And to take this history on the principle and premise that it is merely human, not divine, and therefore that the divine in it is falsehood, so that, in order to get at the truth you must, by your own conjectures and theories, without evidence, dephlogisticate it of God, immortality, and spiritual life, and then present the remaining *caput mortuum* as the accurate result defecated of superstition, just as Wolfe and Niebuhr exorcised the myths and falsehoods of time, superstition and ignorance from antique Greek and Roman poetic and historic remains;—this is as uncritical and unphilosophical as it is irreverent, arrogant, and irreligious.

This deracinating, dislocating, ruthless process of confusion and darkness, upon God's spiritual creations for man's eternal life, is well called the Criticism of Destructives; though it boasts of being the perfection of keen, discriminating, fearless, reasoning, as of supernaturally endowed detectives or experts. The process is that of a Simoom, a whirlwind of suffocating flame. The Decalogue is a falsehood, and the Levitical Law and ritual a mere buttressing

and dragging mechanism in the hands of the "bullock-slaying, fumigating, ignorant servants of the sacrificial slaughter-house." All this brutal caricature is put forth as history, and by it the Old Testament is of less worth than the Egyptian Book of the Dead. The most sacred things become the jest of blasphemy and scorn; the house of prayer a den of thieves; the types of Christ a dictionary of the fetiches of cruelty and superstition.

Instead of being, as in our Lord's interpretation, to the adoring joy of His disciples, the great constant prevision, the foreshining light, of the Atoning Sacrifice, the presence and mercy beforehand of the Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world, through which guilty men might be made to feel the burden of sin, and be trained to faith and penitential prayer for pardon, the whole scheme is an elaborate, repulsive, blaspheming fraud. All the glory disappears, abstracted, as the life from a seaphic body, so that the remnant becomes a corpse, and if preserved at all, is only by critical and rhetorical embalming, for mechanical purposes, but with no spiritual redeeming truth left, or ever intended.

The master-key of a divine interpretation being thrown away, our compasses broken up, and the history searched only on the theory of its not being inspired, the discovery of truth by lecturers on the

people and their history, with such pre-suppositions, becomes impossible. It is as if, in passing through a wilderness where a family has been lost, or on an expedition such as sought for Sir John Franklin in the Arctic regions, you began by destroying all the way-marks and relics of the wanderers, and obliterating the trails, by which a lost company might be traced and rescued, especially the crosses, by which you might know that Christian believers, not pagans or savages, made those marks. So with the painful attempt to disenchant the Hebrew Scriptures of their divine types, their ministering angelic Presences, their supernatural propitiatory testimonies. The treatment of the history as *merely human* results necessarily in the expulsion and denial of Christ and His atoning sacrifice; the faith and hope of pardon and justification in and through Him are abolished instead of death and hell being abolished; and *every trace of any divine purpose of redemption through His blood is taken away*. Compare all this with such a work of spiritual truth and glory as that of Edward's "History of Redemption!"

Our doubts are traitors, and make us lose the good we oft might win; how much more when we set them up as the only authoritative and reliable guides. The doubts of Job, and of every earnest seeker after God, are full of eternal light; it is that which in

the twilight they are searching after; but these men's scornful certainties are the blackness of darkness forever.

A bad workman quarrels with his tools, and himself undertaking to mend them, when he does not know their purpose, only spoils them, and his own work with them.

The gospels themselves are but seeds, diagrams for demonstration, life-lines, outlines, signals from Christ, presentations of Himself, to be followed and filled in by a loving, believing, and therefore appreciative and discerning heart, seeking and receiving the Holy Spirit's guidance. They are as the buds in spring, not to be understood but by growing into flower and fruit. Set in a believing heart they disclose themselves, revealing Christ. It is God shining into the heart to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. In God's light, we see light.

Set in an unbelieving, insensible, prayerless heart, they wither and die. Not even a shadow, or guess, or type of their fulfilment and final meaning is disclosed, and so, doubt, denial and despair, take the place of faith, hope and celestial assurance. If the means given you for working yourselves out of the wilderness of speculative doubt be turned into instruments for the destruction of celestial waymarks,

what can become of the soul! And how miserable the critical work of those who lend themselves to this effort!

What remains to be reconstructed, or what worth reconstructing with all these certainties thrown away? How reconstruct a piece of tapestry, when you have not only torn it into fragments and cast into the fire the original sketch, with the colored thread representing it, but destroyed the loom? An atoning Saviour denied, an infallible revelation annihilated, all the personalities, laws, ceremonies, promises, foretelling and typifying Christ, dissolved, as with sulphuric acid, there is neither basis of fact, nor spiritual design, nor outline, nor motive.

Now by what rule shall the reconstruction proceed? By the letter? They renounce it, as false and of no worth. By the Spirit? They deny that, deny all inspiration of the letter, and the mind of the Spirit. By the plan of God, or any discovered divine purpose? They reject that, and set down God's transactions with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, as merest myths. By the analogy of Faith, so called, which the reasoning and comparing mind discovers from all the materials before it? They deny that as imaginary or dogmatic. By the interpretation of Christ? The very purpose of their criticism is to contradict that, and prove it false. They will reconstruct by

rejecting Christ's teaching, and Paul's and John's testimony, and setting up pure assumptions and falsehoods in place of truth.

They dispute the facts; they deny the ideas.

We take the facts, not to prejudge them as fables, but to find their meaning; and we demonstrate the facts by the ideas. The moment we understand the ideas, the facts change from dead or doubtful letters to living and quickening elements of divine life. Touched with celestial fire, what were before as mere rolls of chemical ingredients fastened to wheels or sticks, shoot flaming into the heavens, and we read their meaning, and the facts become orbs of light. We have to receive the facts, and try God's appointed experiments with them, in a believing, not a destructive, scorning spirit. A diamond will burn in oxygen. Deny the oxygen, and your diamond is more incom- bustible than anthracite coal. The oxygen is your believing and experimenting atmosphere. It is essential to the miracle. When Christ says, "Without me ye can do nothing," it is the me of God's Word, and not of rational criticism. Without your faith, I can do nothing. It is the I AM as divinely revealed, without whose admitted and beloved presence, no faith is possible, but only darkness, not light. The just shall live by his faith. The facts of revelation, that were as a valley of dry bones with ravaging



wolves gnawing at them, stand up an exceeding great army by the Spirit of God breathing through them.

The history of Israel and the Old Testament Books, appealed to by Christ as God's Word, become, under the manipulation of these scholars, what Carlyle said of one of the brightest periods in English history, mangled and crushed in the same way, "*a divine heroism touched with the mace of death, and so smothered, that no human soul shall henceforth recognize it for a heroism; a dismal labyrinth, where centuries have rotted down, and gone confusedly dumb, under this art of burying heroisms and highest facts in chaos.*" It is not men, but nightmares that have written and painted these monstrous caricatures, instead of angels walking with Adam and Eve, and messengers from God, clothed with the rainbows of His promises in the new creating Redeemer of our fallen race.

In these pretences of a rational reconstruction, there is not recognized, even in idea, the sublime work of God's love in the promise and coming of Christ to bear our sins,—nor any imagination of the divine creation and history of the Jewish Church being to foreshadow and prepare for the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world.

There is an artificial depression of the true heavenly horizon below the visible. Celestial truth is

sunk, and the world, with all its pageantry, set forth shining in splendor. It is the work of machinists, scene-painters and changers, theatrical curtain managers, who know nothing of the heavenly meaning of the Great Divine Tragedy, finished with the words, "My God! my God! Why hast thou forsaken me."

Now suppose such a series of prophecies to have been given, and historical frames, in which they have been set (for without such margins they could never come to us authenticated), and suppose the personage to have appeared, whom they foretold, would it be possible for any nation or people to receive such a messenger, without the authentication of his credentials? But being once so authenticated and received, could any friend of his, or believer in his divine authority, deny his passports, or accuse his documents of forgery, without proving himself an enemy? And especially could he pretend to be a friend, if, on account of some conjecture of an interpolation, or supposed discovery of anachronisms, or mistake of dates, or archaisms in language, he should so disparage and discountenance the vouchers, as to make men believe that they had been tampered with by rogues?

Suppose you have a portrait by Raphael or Titian. Shall a piece of gilding, broken away from the frame, or a bit of stucco inserted in the wood, deprive you of

your evidence? Suppose the portrait is accompanied by seals of its genuineness, and vouchers from original witnesses, such as you can not reject, without actually rejecting as a fable the real existence of such painters at the era assigned them in history. Shall the conjectured interpolation of a word or words, or chronological alteration of some recorded events, wrest from you the assurance of your property? Or, if you have so studied the undisputed works of Raphael and Titian, that you can with utmost confidence decide for yourself, will you permit those paintings to pass from your possession as forgeries, through the criticism of men upon flaws which they have detected in the frames, or the pretended discovery of colors affirmed never to have been in use by painters till long after the time when the works of Raphael and Titian were finished?

Let God be true, but every man a liar! This very proverb stands for its whole excellency upon the assumption that God has really spoken to mankind, and not only through the laws of nature, but of speech and human thought, conveying the realities and methods of God's attributes and government and laws for our good. And if God has thus spoken, then *what* He has spoken is infallibly true, and may be certainly discerned; for it could not be infallible for you or me, if we could neither discern its meaning nor its truth.

But yet this infallibility must be enshrined in human words, which being human are not divine, and can not be, except by God's Spirit directing them, suggesting them, for the conveyance of absolute truth from Him. If God has no command of language and can suggest none to mankind, by which He can address or convey the conceptions of immortality and eternity to the soul, then He can never commune with His own creatures, nor can there be any responsibility or accountability from them to Him. If eternal results are hanging upon such responsibility, and yet the creatures who are to meet them can not even understand them, or command any terms in which they may be as sure of their reality, as they are of the being of God, what is called a divine revelation would be of no more use to men destitute of the idea of eternity, than a turnip cut into the shape of a watch could be of use to us for the measurement of time and for the guidance of our conduct accordingly. So that to common sense and uncommon, metaphysically, mathematically, morally, theologically, in every way an infallible divine inspiration is for us an axiom of all reasoning, if we really have a Father in heaven. It is a divine inspiration or atheism, and to this all the issues must come.

If we have an infallible inspiration, then God hath

made us and will redeem us, trusting in Him. If not, there is no God, and death is an eternal sleep. For neither nature nor revelation could ever make real or credible the eternity of matter without souls, or of souls without a Father, or of guilt without disobedience to His known commands, or of pardon for sin without His mercy. And a clear conveyance of the way and the terms of such mercy is absolutely essential to human belief in a Heavenly Father. And therefore Christ says, "No man can come to me, except the Father that hath sent me draw him." And this divine gravitation is upon every human being, by His Word, and His Spirit, and the constraint of an eternity to come. Both His Word and His Spirit may act upon consciences and hearts when we do not see it, and may reveal Christ where we do not know it. But that Christ must be revealed, and infallibly revealed, in order to salvation, is as sure as that God exists, and maintains a righteous government over His universe.

"Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God." To make that confession, the inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures, Moses and the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms foretelling and describing Christ, is inevitably presupposed and acknowledged. If not, there is no Christ, nor any need, nor any possibility of

Him, nor any truth or trust in God. So that here we stand on the way to eternity, with Christ the Author and Finisher of Faith our Teacher, and without Him, atheism and despair.

And in order to the conquest of the world for Christ, the old apologetic style of defence must be abandoned, and the method of aggressive, unflinching, indisputable truth pursued. To this end, every candidate for the ministry ought to be able to say, I can read familiarly not only the Greek Testament, but the Hebrew Bible, and I believe in Christ, as the sole Divine Interpreter of it, the Author and Finisher of Faith, and that every part of Scripture which He received as the truth of God we may and must also receive, or we can not be His disciples, because, if we reject His testimony we accuse Him of falsehood. And the issues between truth and falsehood we know to be eternal.

On no other ground but of eternity and its consequences, could Paul ever ask, Who is sufficient for these things? for this work of preaching? For any man is sufficient, whether with Hebrew or Greek, or only Sanscrit or English, if there is no infallible standard given us of discrimination between truth and falsehood. The ministry of Christ is no more sacred than any other ministry, if by any other souls can be saved. And there need be none at all, if there

are no souls to be lost. Any man is sufficient for these things, if all souls are to be saved at any rate. There is no call for a ministry to assert such truth; for neither could any harm come from its denial, nor any gain from its belief.

These sceptical conjecturers and scalp-ers in their work upon the Bible are like the societies of body snatchers whose purpose is to get subjects for dissection. Only there is this great difference:—the body snatchers *perform their work upon the dead that they may know the better how to cure the living*; but these dissectors of the Scriptures do their work of cutting and slashing *to prove that there is nothing but dead matter at all*; no living soul, no inspiring Spirit, all merely human, nothing divine. If it were not for the society preventing cruelty to animals they would as soon cut and slash a living body as a dead one. No reverence for the Maker of the human frame would deter them. Rationalism is grounded in materialism. The writings of Moses command no more respect than those of Livy and Herodotus. The criticism upon both is the same; no divine prepossession is admitted. They *burke* the living that they may show their skill in dissecting them as dead.

## XXVI.

THE RULE AND REGULATOR OF OUR REASON IN  
THE WORD OF GOD—OUR COMPASS AND CHRO-  
NOMETER FOR TIME AND ETERNITY.

“Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have ETERNAL LIFE? And He said unto him, Why callest thou Me good? There is none good but ONE, that is GOD. But if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments; and come, follow Me.” Matt. xix. 16, 17, 21. “What is written in the Law? How readest thou?”

Only from God to man can we reason rightly, not from man to God. It is clear from these passages that eternal life, not temporal, was the great question at issue among the intelligent Jews, conversant with the Scriptures, when Christ came to fulfil them. By His own sufferings and death He put it beyond all doubt that all the words of God to man, the creature, take their import and their coloring for the soul, from the Eternity and Holiness of the Creator and Preserver. “The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath thee are the Everlasting Arms.” Deut. xxxiii. 27, and Psalm xc. 1, 2. “I lift up my hand to heaven and say, *I live forever.*”—Deut.



xxxii. 40. "AS I LIVE, SAITH THE LORD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, for why will ye die?"—Ezek. xxxiii. 11. Life and death take their meaning from God's life and attributes. These are the sanctions of the Divine Law; and thus the song and the blessing of Moses, the blessing and the curse, are derived for all races and generations, from that *one word* of God's life applied to man's, FOREVER.

"I shall begin with this," says Bishop Butler, opening his Analogy, "which is the foundation of all our hopes and of all our fears, *which are of any consideration*. I mean a FUTURE LIFE." Butler was a writer who weighed his words, if ever reasoner did; and in all his reasonings he meant a FUTURE ENDLESS LIFE, and the present, *for* the future.

The grave, profound, irresistible solemnity with which his arguments are thus weighted, is the quality that gives his book its power over the soul. If the world to come were not a state of endless destinies, determined by our use of this world, things here would be of little moment. A stewardship that ends with this life is small indeed and trifling. There is no such stewardship. Every man lives for Eternity. And this attribute of God's ETERNITY (God inhabiting Eternity, and all that love Him ever living in and

with Him), is that by which alone we can measure TIME, or know its value. We have to “box this compass” on the voyage of life, and we can traverse its magnetisms of Divine intelligence with God only.

This, and nothing less, can be the reading and meaning of the declaration in the eleventh verse of the third chapter of Ecclesiastes, which, with the immediate context, is the key to that wondrous book (as indeed to all the pages of the Scriptures), namely, (1) that GOD HATH SET ETERNITY (*olam*) in the heart of the sons of men; (2) so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end. And (3) whatsoever God doeth it shall be FOREVER *olam*; (4) nothing can be put to it, nor (5) any thing taken from it; and God doeth it, (6) that men should fear before Him; and God (7) requireth that which is past; for (8) God shall judge the righteous and the wicked; for (9) there is a time there, up there, (10) for every purpose and every work.”

Here are concentrated ten particulars, that God only could reveal, concerning His own Eternity, and man’s immortality, their connection and consequences.

Our English version translates the word *olam* in the eleventh verse, as *the world*; out of which translation no interpreter can gather any intelligent meaning; but a sceptic could certainly say, If God has set this world in men’s hearts, no wonder that they are

incorrigibly worldly. But the *same* word (*olam*) occurring in the fourteenth verse, our translators have rendered it justly *Whatsoever God doeth, FOREVER*. The eleventh and fourteenth verses must have the same meaning, for any congruity whatever in the reasoning, or any understanding of the passage. For, what possible consistent significance can there be in it, unless men know the meaning of *forever* as defined by God's *own existence and law*, binding men to an eternal accountableness in all their designs and doings before Him? Men's language, in order to reveal God's truth, must, in all things of eternal significance, be defined by God's being and attributes, any measurement of which God alone can teach.

How otherwise should men *fear before Him*, except only for this, which is added; that God *requireth that which is just*, and that God will judge the righteous and the wicked *for every purpose and for every work*. Compare the words of Moses, "Even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath."—Psalm xc. 11. A man must *believe* this, and act accordingly, for if he does not, there is no returning to this world after death, to correct any of his mistakes by the light of an *eternal experience*; for if he does not *believe* in God's *warnings*, who shall bring him to *see* what shall be after him? There are only these two sources of knowl-

edge; sight in regard to the present, and faith in regard to the future; and if any man denies or disbelieves the future, he must walk on in darkness, for it can not possibly be made known to him in any other way than by revelation from the Omniscient God, who was and is and is to come, who *inhabiteth eternity*, and knows from eternity to eternity, all things and consequences.

Therefore the divine assurance of good for man in this life, looking to that which is to come, but which he has never yet tried, and can not try, till this life is ended, is to *rejoice in God*, and in God's own beautiful things, and to *do good in this life*. That is the travail which God hath given to the sons of men out of His own divine mercy, for their good. This is God's infinite benevolence, the blessed theology of the Old as of the New Testament, this sum of God's law of life and happiness revealed to His children, to glorify God and enjoy Him forever; a God keeping covenant and mercy, *that all people of the earth may fear Him*.—Compare I Kings viii. 39-43. This covenant-requisition, the beneficent Father hath *given*, not imposed, nor exacted, but bestowed on man as the most blessed of all possible gifts, the power and privilege of *doing good* now on earth, and so *enjoying the good* of all his labor forever. I know that there is no profit in working but this. And this is God's

gracious and merciful discipline for man, that every man should enjoy the good of all his labor. This is the gift of God.

This is the very gospel of God in Deuteronomy and Ecclesiastes; the gift of God in Christ, the loving and blessed yoke of His mercy upon men. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, and enter and possess the heaven on earth of working for God and man by love. There is nothing better than that a man should thus rejoice in his own works. It is his portion, if he will receive it, in faith and love. And God answereth him *in the joy of his heart*, with the peace of God that passeth all understanding. "*It is your life*," said Moses, "O people saved by the Lord, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him." "The just shall live by his faith," said Habakkuk; "Faith which worketh by love, and is the fulfilling of the law," said Paul and Peter and James and John. This is the *travail*, which God hath given to men, to be exercised thereby. This announcement clears up a thousand difficulties, pouring upon them the light of God's love, and revealing the glory, even as polarized light discloses the internal magnificence, the structural mystery and beauty of crystallization.

And the whole book of Ecclesiastes is a calculation for the settlement of mortal accounts for nothing less than Eternity, and a judgment there. You

might stumble through the book in deep perplexity; but when, at the close, you turn the great conclusion, as a calcium or drummond light, or flash of lightning, back over the whole, it is at once plain and grand, gloomy and glorious. It is because eternal life, nothing less, depends, that these books of profit and loss, outcries for light, quagmires, struggles, paradoxes, parables, sphinxes, flittings of gigantic formless images of conflict to and fro, are given; it is because eternal life, nothing less, depends.

God alone, who could thus say, *All souls are Mine*, has the power and right, the benevolence and wisdom, to instruct us as immortal beings, created with eternal responsibilities towards Him. In His light, *walking in it*, we see and know love and light as His whole nature, and how to avail ourselves of these attributes. For in Christ (without whom there is no Book of Life, nor Word of God, either Old or New) it is love and light wrestling, all the way, with man's sinfulness, unbelief, and darkness. "Thou hast destroyed thyself, but in ME is thy help." *That is the history*; and God in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, and calling to mankind, "Return unto Me, and be ye reconciled to God, FOR I HAVE REDEEMED THEE" (not that thou *mayst be redeemed*), is the only *solution* of its continued, unfathomable mysteries. I HAVE FOUND A RANSOM FOR THEE.

“By anguish which made pale the sun,  
I hear Him charge His saints that none  
Among His creatures anywhere  
Blaspheme against Him with despair,  
However darkly days go on.

“I knock and cry, Undone, undone!  
Is there no help, no comfort, none?  
No gleaning in the wide wheat plains,  
Where others drive their loaded wains?  
My vacant days go on, go on!”

“Why sayest thou this, O Israel, my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the EVERLASTING GOD, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary?” *Everlasting*; and therefore, trusting in Him, thou and thy way, thy blessedness, everlasting also.

“This faithful and unchanging God  
Lays the foundation of our hope  
In oaths and promises and blood,”

Constant to His covenant of eternal mercy *for all souls that trust in Him* and seek forgiveness from Him. But by the same necessity, the sinful soul that will *not* change its own character, when invited, *banishes itself forever*, not by God's edict, but against God's

promise, from God's presence, in which alone is the fountain of life and the possibility of blessedness.

*Everlasting*, and therefore Butler, at the close of his Analogy said, as his warning to an age of scoffers, "If men can go on to vilify or disregard Christianity, which is to talk and act as if they had a *demonstration of its falsehood*, there is no reason to think they would alter their behavior to any purpose, though there were a *demonstration of its truth*." Everlasting; and in the poetry of Cowper (of which Franklin was so hearty an admirer) as well as the logic of Butler, millions of earnest thinkers and enquirers have read the answer of Eternal Truth for a doubting conscience.

"Man, on the dubious waves of Error tossed,  
His ship half-foundered, and his compass lost,  
Sees, far as human optics may command,  
A sleeping fog, and fancies it dry land;  
Spreads all his canvas, every sinew plies;  
Punts for it, aims at it, enters it, and dies!  
Then farewell all self-satisfying schemes,  
His well-built systems, philosophic dreams;  
Deceitful views of future bliss, farewell!  
He reads his sentence at the flames of hell.

"Hard lot of man—to toil for the reward  
Of virtue, and yet lose it! Wherefore hard?  
He that would win the race must guide his horse  
Obedient to the customs of the course;



Else, though unequalled to the goal he flies,  
A meaner than himself shall gain the prize.  
GRACE leads the right way; if you choose the wrong,  
Take it,—and perish,—but restrain your tongue.  
Charge not, with light sufficient, and left free,  
Your wilful suicide on God's decree."

We wander up and down the Scriptures, and we stumble everywhere upon the footsteps, the pathways, and the thoughts of men as to what they are living for and whither they are going. The book of Job is a chart of men's wanderings and crossings, questionings and disputations; great thinkers, lost sometimes, and striving for indications of the way out; great positivists, doubters, affirmers, despairers, hoppers; but the end, God and Eternity; no doubt of those two realities. And places where the light is so strong and illuminating for all mankind, that the whole book is transfigured, and the wilderness, and darkest labyrinths are explored as at noonday.

And the book of Psalms; what a throng of characters and opinions wandering there; sometimes as on the shores of Acheron, sometimes in the fields and by the streams of Paradise. But all, even through sin and death and misery and darkness, or in great power and pride of unbelief and sensual enjoyment, all tending plainly to the same Eternity and final settlement of accounts.

Here is a traveller crying out, Unless Thy law had been my delight, I had then perished in mine affliction. What does he mean? For death is the one certainty that all acknowledge and none can escape. But he has escaped. The Lawgiver is his Friend and Father. He certainly was not a mere materialist. He did not take the Law of God as a guide for this world merely, nor for any thing that it promised in this world. This man must perish, anyway, as to this world; he must die; all must die. But in the midst of affliction, the Word of God kept his soul in confidence of a better world, and he was going to an eternal refuge and rest in God.

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## XXVII.

FAITH IN GOD OR MAN, ONE OR THE OTHER—  
WHICH IS MOST REASONABLE?

This is the conflict; Materialism against Immortality; Sense and Time against Faith and Eternity. And it is the see-sawing between these ideas, as planks or walking-beams, that governs, or carries into product the machinery of all the active forces in our world. The conflict itself proves the tremendous reality of the force. But what a concentration and power of absurdity in the scepticism that affirms

that there is no such force in reality! That all the business of the world, all the activity of its intellects, all its machinery of motives and motion, of character and conduct, are carried by a faith, that has no actual correlative or cause, but is mere superstition!

God's disclosures of His own being, and of the soul's immortality, go together, and can not be separated; but whatever error veils or distorts the one, does the same to the other. And whatever ministry of providence or grace brightens the one, brightens the other. Habits of sin bury both as in a sepulchre, and shut down the lid over whole nations. Then must come the Lord of glory from heaven, bringing life and immortality to light.

God's revelation of Himself *from* eternity, as caring for sinful man *to* eternity, is a greater wonder than any material prodigy that can be imagined; a greater miracle than all others; indeed, the groundwork of all. But a greater *impossibility* would be that of His giving no revelation, or one not infallible, or permitting a forgery by the devil to govern all ages.

Consider the wonderful form of the oath, *as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth*, and the process of belief and confident knowledge, by which the two asseverations are bound in one; God's eternity, man's

immortality. As the Lord liveth, came first; as thy soul liveth, next; the dependence of the second on the first, forever; the Lord, our dwelling-place in all generations. At length the one consciousness interwoven with and interpenetrated by the other, as *an element of daily life*, the practical magnetism, warning, guiding, impelling, the heart and conduct, along with the consciousness, Thou God seest me!

It became at length the common property and use both of prophets and people; an appeal on the most solemn occasions of life and death. See for this the adjuration of the prophet Elisha to Elijah, just before the translation of the latter, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee!" And then see the same, out of the anguish of the heart of the Shumanite woman, appealing to Elisha. What a divine illumination! What a proof of divine light reaching the depths of all hearts that ever waited in faith on the word of the living God! What a fore-shining of Him who is the Way, the Truth, the Life, and who said, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

Consider also the remarkable saying of Abigail to David, "The soul of my Lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God. As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, seeing the Lord hath withholden thee from blood." For centuries

we see this form of devoutest and most solemn adjuration among all classes. Now this intercommunion of God's eternity and man's immortality, and the known responsibility accordingly, are nothing less than a miracle of divine light.

Divine Revelation is the history of a divinely instructed manhood searching after God, and a rebellious darkened unbelieving manhood denying him. Only in the process of this conflict, and out of it, is created and demonstrated the literature of the Bible. It would be more impossible to construct the Pentateuch or create the Psalms of David, without this conflict between God and man, truth and falsehood, eternal love and hatred, or out of minds and hearts not acquainted with it, or that did not believe and know man's immortality and eternal responsibility to God, than it would to make nourishing bread out of the mummies of Egyptian catacombs.

But the knowledge and the working of these elements in their infinite reality, consequences, causal forces, known only to God, could be *made known* to man only by divine communication.

Man could neither testify nor imagine his own creation in the image of God, nor his own fall, nor God's intervention to save him, or raise him up, nor the promise through the seed of the woman, nor the established institutes and laws of his redemption. But

the facts and God's interpretation of them going together, man's fall and hereditary sinfulness and responsibility, and God's interposing mercy and disciplinary providence with the race, both demonstrate and are demonstrated by the whole following history. Man may trace the record, as he can trace the river Amazon to its springs and mountains; but could no more invent it than he could create the mountains and the river, or the ocean into which its waters pour. God Himself foreordains and predicts the history *by the very first promise of redemption*; and then follow the processes of fulfilment in and upon mankind; the march of empires and races, Jew and Gentile, made subservient to God's infinite work for eternity, the steps of which God alone could reveal and infallibly record.

The guilt, ruin and misery of man, incurable, universal, the whole creation wailing and travailing in bondage, are the ONE DEMONSTRATION of all ages and nations. The whole development of thought and reason, the whole dissection and judgment of man's character, with the foresight of the conduct and consequences from it, and the laying bare of causes and results, are God's history of His own work with and upon man as an immortal being. The wickedness and immortality of man are the articulations with which the merciful interventions of God, by revela-

tions, miracles, warning and redeeming truths, are bound together. Growths and conclusions, traced back to Genesis are as demonstrable morally and therefore absolutely out of that book, as the forty-seventh proposition of Euclid out of the preceding propositions and primal axioms, geometrically. There could no more be this history of grace and faith and prayer without God, than there could be God's universe without a Creator or geometry without a mind. If the history were not infinitely true, it would be supernatural lying; more unnatural and impossible for science, reason or imagination to conceive and account for, as a lie, than to believe, as a divine revelation. Given, the depravity of man and the mercy of God, miracles are as natural, necessary and supernatural as God's own love.

Now there never has been on earth a religion of love that did not ground itself in the immortality of man; never a religion *outside the Bible* that taught love to the gods, or presented them with qualities that *entitled* them to love, or attracted love, or called for love; never the revelation of gods or a God that *asked* for love, or made love a necessary condition of acceptance and of happiness. God alone does this, and does it on the ground that He lives forever; His eternity is the argument. But of what consequence is the eternity of God, or how can that

be an argument with any man who is not aware of the immortality of his own being, any one who believes that he himself is to end his spiritual existence at the dissolution of his animal life?

“Set your hearts unto all the words of this law; for it is not a vain thing for you, BECAUSE IT IS YOUR LIFE, TO LOVE THE LORD THY GOD, and to keep His commandments *that thou mayst live*. I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live, that thou mayst love the Lord thy God, FOR HE IS THY LIFE, and the length of thy days.” It is demonstrated by Moses and Christ that genuine faith in God and faith in God’s Word are one and the same thing, and that the one can not exist without the other.

The idea of faith in God without a revealed promise is an imagination. We do not know that there ever was such a reality; there is never an instance of it recorded or supposed in the Scriptures. It seems impossible for any sinful creature. All the piety of which any account is given in the Word of God, all the elements belonging to faith, are of God’s production in the soul, by drawing it to Himself with words of forgiving love and mercy. A revealed promise has made all the distinction between us and fallen angels. How could it ever be otherwise?



So that the sentence, with which even Dr. Perowne closed one of his admirable Hulsean Lectures, conveys a supposition inconsistent with the truth and logic of the divine narrative, when he says that "never can there be a sublimer heroism of faith than that which, claiming *no promise of future recompense*, goes down into the mystery of darkness, leaning only upon God." There is no such mystery, for a believer in God's Word to enter into; for "in His light we see light," and by that light faith walks. And "the recompense of the reward" promised by God beyond the grave is that to which, *according to the divine record*, the believers and heroes of faith, from Abel downward, always had respect. For souls whose customary adjuration was this, "As sure as God liveth, and as thy soul liveth," there could be no such thing possible as *a mere secular horizon*.

Whenever in these Psalms a soul is found crying out after God, and saying, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire besides Thee," it is certain that such a soul knows a difference between earth and heaven, knows that there is a heaven, and that it is the dwelling-place of God. And this man's experience and the record of it is for all souls, that ever find themselves affected in like manner, with any such yearnings; an assurance from God, as good for them as for the melodi-

ous soul that has gone before them, that "Thou wilt guide me by Thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory."

But a thousand such seekers after God could never create a Saviour.

The united heads and hearts of a hundred thousand Platos could not constitute a little finger of the wisdom and mercy of Jesus Christ, though they might go far to constitute a prophetic assurance that God would send such a Saviour, that He must be on His way, and would certainly, in His own time, be manifested from heaven.

Take for example such expressions as those in the 16th, 17th, 49th, 61st, and 73d Psalms, "I have set the Lord always before me. Thou wilt show me the path of life; at Thy right hand, are pleasures for evermore." Instead of a portion in this life, "I will behold Thy face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness." "God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave, for He will receive me." "I am continually with Thee. Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire besides Thee. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever." Set along with these passages the four great watch-words of Job's

piety; those light-houses of patience, faith, submission, humility, trust and love, enough for the encouragement, example and security of the tempted soul through all hurricanes in all ages. They were guides for a celestial life for pagans, for the heathen, as well as for the Israelites, proving the existence of true piety outside of that appointed family and race to whom the oracles of God were entrusted for safe-keeping for all mankind.

“The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.”

“I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.” “O that my words were now written in a book. For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.”

Were these the flashes of an earthly sagacity or a worldly hope, or dreams of a soul that could dream of *being* a soul only by taking opium? Were these shafts of intensest lightning from eternity and heaven the contrivance of the priests of an Egyptian or legendary science? You might easier believe that Mont Blanc was built by potato-beetles, or the Eddystone light-house raised and lighted by lobsters and jelly-fishes. The meaning of such words is as undeniable as that of the light that lighteth every man that com-

eth into the world. It never was withheld or hidden from any age.

Where, ever or else, was there given a revelation of God's power, that He may be loved, and of His mercy that He may be feared, and both, that men might trust in God's mercy *because they have sinned against Him*. "There is forgiveness with Thee that Thou mayest be feared. For Thy name's sake, pardon mine iniquity *for it is great*." "He looketh upon all mankind, and if any say I have sinned, He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light, and be lightened with the light of the living."

The literature of the whole world from Adam to Christ can show no such revelation of truth concerning God our Father and Friend as the words of the young prophet Elihu in the 33d and 36th chapters of the book of Job. The inspiration of the Almighty is there.

But, say the critics, it is too good, too advanced, and perfect for such an antique period. Such knowledge, say the learned commentators, concerning God's attributes and providences could not have existed at so early an age. How then could it be found in minds like Abraham's and Moses'? But from whom at any age could it have come at all? And having come, we have a right to read in it all that a trusting and loving heart can find. We are not shut up to

the reading of the Bible through the lenses of superstition and fear. On the contrary, the Holy Spirit, the Comforter from Christ, is our Interpreter, both of the Law, and of God's promises and providences.

God's showings unto Moses, at the beginning of the Priesthood, and in the settlement of its fixtures and meanings, were all in and around this one central orb, the forgiveness of sin. That once revealed and promised, there is no such thing afterwards as darkness. "Pardon our iniquity and our sin, and *take us for Thine inheritance.*" The forgiveness and acceptance with God were the only blessing worth revealing, worth asking, worth providing for. So utterly and annihilatingly was every thing else reduced to nothingness, without this, that Moses himself prayed, "If Thou wilt pardon, all is well, for we are Thine; but if not, life is not worth having, and there can be no good. If Thou wilt not pardon Thy people, blot me also out of Thy book." Forgiveness was not sought for the purchase of present blessings, or of favor in this world, or life here and its enjoyments, but for itself, for the life and love of God, the removal of sin, and a partaking of God's holiness, God's eternal life. Take us for Thine inheritance! What could be in any sense God's inheritance, if not for immortality, for eternity. God's, as long as God Himself liveth?

But the vast, profound eternal meaning of this phrase is a multitudinous divine radiancy into which we do not and can not enter, till we come to the record of Paul's prayers, which convey us by the Holy Spirit so far into the eternal world. It was in fact a veiled *prophecy* of Moses, fulfilled only in Christ's resurrection, ascension, and eternal glory, with believers in Him the new created partakers of that glory in the likeness of Christ, according to the passages in Ephesians i. 11, 18, and iii. 19, and Philippians iii. 21, and Col. i. 12, and iii. 24, and Acts xxvi. 18, and xx. 32, and I Peter i. 3, 4, and II i. 4, compared with Heb. ix. 15, and Romans viii. 18, 19, 29, 30, and I John iii. 2. The comparative study of these passages reveals something of "the exceeding and eternal weight of glory" comprehended in the phrase (Rom. viii. 17), "children of God, heirs of God, and *joint heirs with Christ*, if so be that we suffer with Him, *that we may be also glorified together.*" Here, from Moses to Paul, are God taking us for His inheritance in Christ, Christ possessing us as "His inheritance in the saints," and we made partakers and inheritors of the same divine nature in and through Christ's sufferings and glory. When Christ, in the walk to Emmaus, began at Moses, it is no presumption to suppose that even as in these passages we learn it, the interceding and prophetic prayer of Moses was expounded by Him.

All our duties to God our Saviour are revealed to us in the atmosphere of the knowledge of sin against God, and its eternal consequences, from which Christ came to deliver us. Both are measured by the attributes of God, which we begin to understand aright only in Christ, and in His sufferings and death, to save men from *everlasting* death. All our knowledge of God would be nothing, without the knowledge of His holiness and eternity. None of our responsibilities to Him, none of our sins against Him, can be measured without reference to that, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned." The importance of every thing mortal is its relation to immortality. Some of the thoughts even of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius might in this thing teach Christian teachers. "For neither," said he, "wilt thou *do any thing well*, which pertains to man, nor the contrary, without at the same time having *reference to things divine*." And what a rebuke to those who maintain that it is essential to the perfection of statesmanship to separate the State from things divine. This is a tenet of modern secularism, and Christian citizens are advised to believe it, and as politicians to live by it. Let them prosper by it, if they can; but of this we are sure, that nothing pertaining to man will ever be done well, without at the same time having reference to God supremely, and in all things.

There are many religions on earth, but only one redemption, and one true definition of sin, as always committed against God, whatever it be, either in purpose or effect. And as to its consequences, sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. When is it finished? Never in this world; not in the dying of the body; but THE SOUL THAT SINNETH, it shall die. And ye shall die in your sins, our Lord said, if ye believe not in Me; but he that believeth in Me shall never die. Christ never concealed or abated the end, the result of human belief and action, but always taught men to consider the eternal consequences, and to act accordingly. To exclude the necessary effect of an action, it has been well remarked, is to take away all meaning from the word action;—in fact to strike duty with blindness.

Faith in God and an eternal world is as necessary to a true religious experience as the correlation of the eye and the daylight for seeing, or the air and the lungs for breathing. "To them of old was the Gospel preached, as well as to us; but the word preached did not profit some of them, *not being mixed with faith* in them that heard it." They did not *look to the end*, because their hearts were blinded; and while thus blinded, and permitting themselves to be blinded, they *could* not. Not because there was no end revealed, but the fog that arose out of



their own hearts enveloped also the realities that were before them. They escaped from those realities, as the cuttle fish from its enemies by its own ink, "because they *did not like to retain God in their knowledge,*" and therefore God gave them over to a mind void of judgment, *ἄδοκταον νοῦν*; being vain in their imaginations, their foolish heart was darkened, but without excuse.—Rom. i. 20, 21.

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## XXVIII.

### THE ARGUMENT FROM ETERNITY TO THE CERTAINTY OF A VERBAL INSPIRATION.

There are not wanting manifest analogies in regard to the reflection and growth of man's *organic intuitions* as in a living receptive mirror, from the image of God in which he was created. This intuition of eternity, this firmament of light and duty, part of the law written on men's hearts, would have remained clear, but for sin. We know our own immortality, not because we see it, but because we see and know the reality of all other things *worth knowing*, by it. It is the idea, the medium, invisible, that like the atmosphere, shows us all things *in their relation to God and ourselves*, in their relative importance. We do not see the atmosphere in a landscape, any more than

we do our own eyes; it is the one thing that we do not see; but we see all things through that invisible space of ether, without which nothing could be seen or known; not even light. The idea of our immortality is the one thing that dignifies all our knowledge, and raises us above the brutes to a known relation with the attributes and eternity of God.

A quiet lake, clear, still, translucent, how beautiful in itself, how suggestive and instructive in its reflection of the heavens! Stand upon the bank and look down into it, and what do you not see? The reverberations of infinite space and of eternity are in it, even as GOD HATH SET ETERNITY IN MEN'S HEARTS; and if you could look down into *them*, in their clear original depths, you would see the eternity and immortality deepest. So, the air itself, and its power of endless perspective, are there in the lake, as well as the moon and stars in a clear night, or the trees on the banks, and the flowers fringing the water.

Thus the very law of human intelligence from the Creator is in this reverberation of Eternity, and the inseparable connection of all faculties, reasonings, purposes, passions, actions, with it. Thus, the *theopneustic* voices from God to man, their meanings in the Scriptures of Life, their combination of infinite spiritual glory and solemnity, with mere material circumstance, the verdure, the mountains, meadows, for-

ests, are all reflected in the soul, with this air of immortality, *never without it*. If you say this is not affirmed, not visible, as the trees are in the lake, not stereotyped or mirrored, as the stars are in the water, and therefore not there at all, not even intimated, you might as well say that the atmosphere is not reflected, nor the reality of space, in the lake, although the shadows of the trees are hanging in infinitude, the infinite environment, which is invisible, being as absolute a reality as the branches and the quivering verdure, visible; and so the air and its unseen, endless, immeasurable spaces, and measurements or indications of relative unfathomable distances are there. The lake picture utters all this to the soul.

The lake picture is a reverberation in nature of immeasurable realities in the attributes of God the Creator. Shall there be no such reverberation of Himself in the souls of His intelligent creatures, that they may know Him and love Him as their Father forever? For what then do the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shadow forth the illimitableness of His habitation in Eternity? The very foundation and measure of our idea of Eternity is in God; and of Eternal Life, a life in and with Him; and of Eternal Death, *a life alienated from Him*.

The words *olam* in Hebrew and *aionios* in Greek,

are therefore to be determined, in all things relating to the future world, and men's responsibilities and rewards there, by their *highest meaning* in God and His attributes. As in a cloudy day at sea, we take the sun, the first glimpse we have of him, and with our quadrant bring him to the horizon and then and thus calculate and know our reckoning, our position, though before all was uncertain; so with our use of these words, in gaining one sight of God; we bring them down to our latitude and longitude in the eternities, *by finding God*. And so, there are texts, sentences, whole paragraphs of infinite meaning, *with those words, as defined by what we know of God*, but vacant, unmeaning, uncertain, without Him. Deprive the word of its *highest meaning*, and you take from the whole sentence *all its meaning*. Its purpose of eternal warning and instruction, its light, love, mercy, all at once gone, its usefulness for immortality as crushed, as when the use of a compass or chronometer or barometer, is nullified by setting wood or worsted or glue or colored water in place of the magnetic needle, or the mainspring and the mercury.

The words for sin and holiness had a meaning relative to God and His attributes and eternal government never possessed by the Greek tongue till its baptism in the Hebrew inspiration.

The word for redeemer was divine, ineffable, its

whole meaning never to be fully known, till Christ should be seen uplifted on the cross, and dying for man's salvation. Yet God was pleased to derive it from the long succession of typical instituted rites and customs appointed in His law for refuge and security against the *nemesis* of an earthly justice, for deliverance from the Avenger of Blood, and for eternal propitiation at the Mercy Seat. So the word arose from the measure of a temporal necessity to be the computation of an infinite immeasurable gift of the divine mercy. So the great watchwords of our salvation are pure words, drawn through alembics of human experience, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. They are teaching and revealing words, sometimes *Koithnoors*, mountains of light, angelic schoolmasters under the Divine Spirit, to bring us to Christ.

If a man would learn the utmost scientific precision in the use of language for conveyance both of physical and spiritual truth, which the limits of the human mind render it impossible perfectly to reveal, let him study the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures in their commerce of thought between Time and Eternity. Let him study Job and Isaiah in the Old Testament, John and Paul in the New. Let him weigh every word, every sentiment, every verb, adjective and inflection, and observe the construction of those open windows,

through which he makes companionship of infinite accuracy and infinite comprehensiveness, the microscopic and telescopic forces that are combined in those languages, for the report of God's thoughts for man's guidance.

As an heir of immortality he is travelling among the infinites of opinion and result, and he has to take his measurements of certainty and exactness accordingly; not with the indefiniteness of science falsely so called, concerning the "silent worship of the unknown and unknowable," or the evolutions "of natural force from a practical eternity." He can not afford such looseness among unknown depths. He can not afford to try those mountain passes without a guide. If materialism were true, a false step either way would be of no consequence. But if there be a spiritual world, and an eternal inheritance in it, inseparable from the soul, according to wrong or right opinion and character in this world, then the gift of truth now, and the unerring perception of it, are of infinite importance.

Archbishop Trench in his two works on the "Synonyms of the New Testament," and on "The Authorized Version and its proposed Revision," so full of profound and suggestive thought on the inspiration and interpretation of God's Word, says in the latter work, "The more deeply we are persuaded of the inspira-

tion of Holy Scripture the more intolerant we shall be of any lets and hindrances to the arriving of a perfect understanding of that which the mouth of God has spoken." And in the former, referring to Hebrews v. 12, the principles of the doctrine of Christ, the oracles of God, τὰ στοιχεῖα τῆς ἀρχῆς τῶν λογίων, he remarks that "a patient study of these is essential to any secure advances in Christian theology; for here, as everywhere else, disappointment awaits him, who thinks to *possess the whole, without first possessing the parts*, of which the whole is composed." The words are the στοιχεῖα, the rudimental elements, the letter, inspired by the Spirit. For thus it is that God hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. God shines, and the words mark His sunbeams, and the Spirit is in them and with them. The words are the *gnomons* of the Divine Dial, that tell by their lines of shadow the shining of the Divine Mind.

It is only thus through *patience*, and comfort of the Scriptures, that we have hope in them, and life in Christ through them. But if we *torture* them, if we set a press gang upon them, if we cast them into prison on false accusations, and then compel them into a controversial regiment of marines, we only criminate and imprison ourselves. If any thing on

earth should be as free as air, it is God's Word, and its interpretation, *in reliance on His own free Spirit, promised to all in connection with the inspired letter, in answer to prayer.* The things written for us, thousands of years ago, were certainly inspired in the writing, in the language, in the thoughts, or they could not have been for us, or belonged to us, or of any authority for us. "For, *whatsoever things were written afore time, were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope.*" And so, "Jesus Christ was a minister for the truth of God, *to confirm the promises made unto the Fathers, and that the Gentles may glorify God for His mercy.*"

God alone knoweth all the meanings and fulfillments of His own eternally abiding Word; what was *meant* by God, not what men may conjecture or translate, according to their own opinion. So, when God *quotes from Himself*, as in the New Testament from the Old, and *varies the language of the quotation*, the eternal Word is the same; the variation hath in it no shadow of turning or of contradiction; it is but the same light on another face of the diamond.

Prof. Stuart gives an example of three passages, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, in each of which the same quotation from the Old Testament is given in somewhat different words; but *the sense is the same*,



and he adds, "*De minimis non curat lex*, say civilians, in construing human laws; and the maxim applies as well to the manner of diction in the Scriptures as in any other book."—On Heb. x. 16. But to the Scriptures as all divine, and not of man's creating; to the Scriptures as quoted by God-inspired men.

And therefore, applied to the Scriptures as inspired, the maxim becomes, *De minimis curat Deus*; for God's Spirit chose the variations, and directed the minds that applied the original text in their own quotations. If our Lord could say, "The hairs of your head are all numbered," he could as truly say, "The words which ye shall speak for Me are all numbered, just as He said, "I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me," and, "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you." God takes as much care of the minutes as of the hours; and if any man asks, Doth God take care for oxen? the apostle answers, "For our sakes, no doubt, *this is written*." And this reasoning of Paul (I Cor. ix. 9, 10) is one of the strong incidental proofs of a plenary inspiration, *extending to the words*; for he distinguishes between what man saith and what God saith, and declares this questioned quotation to be God's. And afterwards, with the same authority he says, "*The things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord*."

But how as to errors that may creep in by time, by manuscripts lost or corrupted, by copyists, or interpolators of sentences or words? Will they be permitted? or is there an equal *a priori* certainty of their being prevented or forestalled? We should certainly conclude that as to any vital error, that might destroy the divine purpose of the Book, there is; but in things indifferent, there may be an equally divine carelessness. Error would not be permitted in a divine text, where souls might stumble and fall into perdition by it. A man conveying a cup of cold water may make a false step, and spill a portion; but he can not alter the water. Nor does he change its nature, though he takes it in an earthen vessel. The poorest language on earth may have to be used for the translation; but a translator, desiring to win souls, can not help conveying a knowledge of Jesus and His dying love, sufficient for salvation. It is still the water of life, no matter for the patched goat-skin bottles.

The perfection of a chronometer does not require that it instruct the supercargo to what cities he must carry his freights, nor how he should load his vessel, nor with what merchandize. The perfection of a chart does not necessitate information as to a science of the winds, or the mathematics of astronomy. But all that goes into the idea of a perfect

timepiece and a perfectly safe and accurate map, must be found respectively, *in these articles*. They must not teach *errors* of time and place, since either would be the insurance of shipwrecks. Even so, the Scriptures *must teach eternal infallible spiritual truth*, though they do not require an encyclopedia of science, but only an eye single to God's will, and God's principle of righteousness, through faith in Christ, through Christ, dwelling in the heart by faith. This is the kingdom of God, both within the Scriptures, and within the soul. And every man, coming to Christ, hath both.

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## XXIX.

SETTLEMENT OF CERTAINTIES—WHAT DID THE OLD HEBREWS BELIEVE AND KNOW AS TO DEATH AND LIFE, IMMORTALITY AND HEAVEN — TESTIMONY OF THE APOCRYPHA.

In the history of a settlement of men's certainties in regard to Divine Inspiration, it is instructive to note the prepossessive, and corrective elements prepared against the Deism and Materialism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in the growth of the great body of English Theological and philosophic literature of the seventeenth. For we have, in the compass of some ten or twelve volumes of that liter-

ature, and other books growing out of it, both native and foreign, such as "Stillingfleet's *Origines Sæcræ*," "Howe's *Living Temple*," "Butler's *Analogy*," "Pascal's *Thoughts*," "Halyburton on *Natural and Revealed Religion*," "Lightfoot's *Harmonies of the Old and New Testaments and of the Evangelists*," "Archbishop Usher's *Reasons for our Faith in God's Word*," "Reinhardt's *Plan of Christ*," "Edward's *History of Redemption*," "Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*," "Blunt's *Coincidences*," "Chalmers' *Astronomical Discourses*," "Robinson's *Harmony of the Gospels*," "Alexander's *Connection and Harmony of the Old and New Testament*," "Robinson's *Biblical Researches in Palestine*," and the now unsepulchred books and localities of dead and buried cities in the East; a library of demonstration, with the resurrected vouchers, against all the objections of what is called Modern Thought in opposition to the books of Divine Revelation. Add to these volumes such a work as "D'Aubigne's *History of the Reformation*," and even a few of the many biographical illustrations of the work of the Divine Spirit with the Divine Scriptures in individual souls, such as "Luther on *Galatians*," "Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*," "Latimer's *Sermons and Life*," and other illustrious examples in the martyr literature of England, "Baxter's *Saints' Rest*," "Doddridge's *Rise and Progress*," the "Life

of John Newton," the "Life of Henry Martyn," the "Life and Works of the Poet Cowper," "Bunyan's Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners"; and for the masses of mankind the demonstration is as a vast sea-wall or rocky continent, against the ocean, and a succession of lighthouses at the entrance of the harbors.

The immortal hymn of Cowper on the dying thief confessing Christ, or the one little exquisite poem by Mrs. Browning on Cowper's grave, or Henry Kirke White's "Star of Bethlehem," is worth more to the individual soul, to the German nation, to England, to the human race, than the five octavo volumes of "Ewald's History of Israel," or all the books of Rational learning, criticism, and theory in the world put together. So is Goodwin's "Child of Light walking in Darkness." So is Toplady's "Rock of Ages, cleft for me." So are all the true songs of the soul from the beginning of man's pilgrimage. And the greater and wider the difference and distance in position, age, and era of these experimental witnesses, the more absolute their demonstration of the same divine soul-saving truths. "The great principles *spoken out everywhere* in the Old and New Testament" says Coleridge, "resemble the fixed stars, which appear *of the same size to the naked as to the armed eye.*" They need neither telescope nor microscope, but only a believing heart.

The meaning is the more indisputable because not put merely in metaphysical shape by systematic reasoners, but in the breath of daily life, the life of prayer, by common men walking with God, and almost unconsciously thinking aloud their communion with Him, their destiny in His Being, their hopes, fears, confidences, beliefs, consecrations, prayers, towards Him and His eternal dwelling-place. What did these antique Hebrews think, this strange old race, this "peculiar people," whose whole existence we learn about only from the Word of God, and from their relations to Him? "Spiritual things are spiritually discerned; and in this and all similar enquiries, the thoughts of the most spiritual are to be sought for, and in their most spiritual moments."\* The thoughts of men such as Enoch, Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David, Elijah, Hezekiah, Isaiah, and of those whose life was intricately and practically interwoven with theirs, and in sympathy and fervent communion; of those also who were in strife and conflict even unto death; both the sympathy and the battle growing out of opinions towards God and eternity, and the opinions ruling or constituting the character and history of the whole nation.

There can be no truer canon of interpretation than

\* "Star of our Lord," by Francis W. Upham, Author of the "Wise men and who they were," p. 176.

this, *the most spiritual men in their most spiritual moments*, not in seasons of doubt and darkness merely, but of celestial light; not what they dreamed of, sleeping, but what they believed, waking, and acted accordingly. This was their revelation from God, not a mere Egyptian Book of the Dead, or of anticipated transmigrations. It was the light of Hezekiah's life, walking before God in truth and with a perfect heart, and weeping sore when the word came to him from God, "Thou shalt die and not live." It was the light, the life, the joy, of his recovery from sickness and from death, and of his thanksgiving, "Thou hast *loved my soul out of the pit, for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back*. For the grave can not praise Thee, death can not celebrate Thee; they that go down into the pit can not hope for Thy truth. The living, the living shall praise Thee, as I do this day; and the father to the children shall make known Thy truth." How profoundly beautiful the thought and its expression that God by His forgiving love had tenderly raised up a despairing soul out of the pit to rejoice in Him and to praise His name forever! The Hebrew alone gives the divine intensity of the work of mercy. "Thou hast loved my soul up out of the pit."—Is. xxxviii. 17. Even so hath God ever since loved us all up out of the death of trespasses and sins and raised us up and quickened us in Christ.

Now if there be serious question at any time as to the meaning of parts of this revelation of death and life, that interpretation is certainly to be sought and preferred, which brings us nearest to God, which has the most of God in it, and of His goodness, and of His disclosures of the unseen world, not that which can be restricted to this world. Of any two interpretations possible, the most exalted and spiritual is likely to be the truest. "Nearer to Thee, nearer, my God, to Thee," is the right principle of study and thought.

And then, the *highest*, not the *lowest* of our discoveries is to be adopted, postulated, as our light, guide, and encouragement. It is only thus that we can rightly read either the characters of the friends of God in the Scriptures, or the true range of their thoughts, or the direction and power of their opinions, or the meaning even of their prayers. Take the case of Hezekiah, and the endeavor of the critics to extract from his fervent supplications in the dread of dying a demonstration that he had no knowledge, no idea, of immortality. John Bunyan could be proved to have had no such idea, by the same method, if you start from the expressions of his intervals of gloom, anxiety, and terror; whereas, the very darkness of his soul under the hidings of God's face was the proof that he thoroughly knew and believed the



revelation of Eternal Life in God, and longed after it. A man's capacity of life, when found near perishing in a snow-storm, is not to be judged by laying a thermometer upon his freezing person. Hezekiah's life of piety and prayer, and his intensity of desire that his time to seek and to serve and to praise God on earth might be lengthened out, were the signals of his belief of a life to come with God forever.

John Bunyan, two thousand years later, makes the record that "though God doth visit my soul with never so blessed a discovery of Himself, yet I have found again that such hours have attended me afterwards, that I have been in my spirit *so filled with darkness*, that I could not so much as conceive *what that God and what that comfort was*, with which I had been refreshed." And again, "I have sometimes seen more in a line of the Bible than I could well tell how to stand under; and yet at another time the whole Bible hath been to me as dry as a stick; or rather, *my heart hath been so dead and dry unto it*, that I could not *conceive* the least dram of refreshment, though I have looked it all over." The experience of yet another GREAT HEART among believers, John Owen, is the same; and to such an education by the Divine Spirit with the Word, we owe such inestimably precious and comforting volumes as "Rutherford's Letters," "Caryl on Job," Archbishop Leighton's "Com-

mentary on Peter," "Coles on God's Sovereignty," "Owen on the 130th Psalm," "Flavel on Keeping the Heart."

The critics that look only through the *dead and dry heart* of their own unbelieving *agnosticism*, and denial of the supernatural, can not find, will not admit that there can be found, in Hezekiah's language (to use Bunyan's own words) the least dram of refreshment or divine light, and so they deny its inspiration and its meaning altogether. Think of critical experts informing us that this and that cloud-rift of intelligence and light from heaven could never have existed either in Moses' time or in Hezekiah's; for that the Hebrews did not then even know their own immortality, or the unity of God! Think of taking the very anguish and gloom of a sinful conscience in the terror of hell and the grave to prove that they knew nothing of a life beyond the grave! so that the prayers and gratitude alike of Hezekiah and of David are pressed, dried, and presented with the varnish and smell of the sepulchre, and all the light and life of immortality extinguished from them.

And these same critics have not impartiality enough to ask the question, If these men knew nothing of a life after death, and a retribution in Eternity, why should they *fear* death, or what *could* they fear beyond it, or why blast and corrode their daily expe-

rience of life's pleasures with its terrors? a thing which men even under the clearest revelation of a future state successfully avoid, in an insensibility of the carnal mind which cannibals do not rival.

Hence, from the history of Abraham we see the unspeakable absurdity of the pretence that the old Hebrews learned the immortality of the soul only by the promise and desire expressed by the later prophets for a continued national life; that the habit of hoping for a *national* existence, *even before they became a nation*, could beget in them the conception and belief of an individual existence and responsibility of the soul. If that was the way in which they arrived at it, then manifestly neither Abraham, Isaac, nor Jacob could ever have had it. Yet this is the notion held even by Dean Stanley,\* and some other English writers, in imitation of leading German critics. The immortality of the individual soul learned by the intense desires of an earthly patriotism!! This notion is outdone

\* "The conviction," says Stanley "which the prophets entertained of the perpetual existence of the nation, *prepared the way for the conviction* of the endless life of the single human being." And he adds the following sentence *as authority*, from "Kuenen's Religion of Israel": "In a word, Judaism was now on the road towards the adoption of the hope of a personal immortality."—Hist. of the Jewish Church, 3d series, sect. 44, p. 167. *On the road*, down as late as Malachi, never known before!!

only by Mr. Darwin's supposition that the human mind learned the idea of God by Natural Selection, imagining the benefit that might be derived from such an idea for common human culture before man was evolved! or by Mr. Lecky when he says that "Christianity *floated into* the Roman Empire on the *wave of credulity* that brought with it *the long train of Oriental superstitions and legends.*" The credulity of a mind that can believe such a system as that of Christianity and the soul's immortality in God to have been a floating island of falsehood, consolidated into a continent of truth by Christ and His apostles, is itself all but a miracle of unreason.

When God said to Abraham "I am thy shield, and thine exceeding great reward; walk before Me, and be thou perfect"; and when it was added, "This promise is unto thee and to thy seed forever, and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed; and I will establish my covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, and I will be their God,"—the whole revelation embraced and appealed to a sense of immortality and accountability in every soul; *Me*, and *thee*, and *thy seed* in their generations, an *everlasting* covenant.

The soul's immortality and blessedness in God was

not only the *highest* thing, but it was the *only* thing of any importance, the only thing worth revealing; and the logic of the covenanting instrument, as well as the infallible interpreting word of the Lord Jesus, has made it absolutely certain that Abraham understood its eternal significance; and also that *then as now* the principle of God's government over men, its righteousness, was in their known *eternal responsibility to Him*, as the God of the spirits of all flesh, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and of all families of the earth. The idea of that responsibility was organic in the human reason, when God created man in His own image. Compare Ecclesiastes iii., and Ecclesiasticus xvii. 18.

The evidence of these great truths as an heir-loom in the souls of the old Hebrews is found not merely in the literature of their prophets, but in that of the Apocrypha (taken from the prophets and historians), in the books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, which refer in almost every chapter to the histories in Genesis, and the immortality of the soul as *there made known*, and the practical lessons of life inculcated from the contrast drawn between the ungodly and the righteous, between the immortality of righteousness, and the falsehood of materialism. The second and third chapters of the "Wisdom of Solomon" are a vivid contrast between the songs of Anacreon and

the hope of the believer in God confronted. "As for the mysteries of God," says the writer, speaking of the heathen nations, "they knew them not, neither hoped they for the wages of righteousness, nor discerned a reward for blameless souls. *For God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of His own eternity.* Nevertheless, through envy of the devil came death into the world; *and they that do hold of his side do find it. But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them; they are in peace; their hope is full of immortality.* After having been a little chastised they shall be greatly rewarded; for God proved them and found them worthy for Himself. They shall judge the nations and have dominion over the people, and their Lord shall reign forever." See also the references to Enoch's translation, and its lessons (ch. iv. 10), and the sublime descriptions of the divine wisdom (vii. 26-30), and in Ecclesiasticus iv. 11-17, and v. 4-7, and ch. xvi. 17, 18-22. "The trial of all things is in the end." There is not the slightest indication that any of these truths or hopes for eternity were ever lighted at the shrines of Plato and Socrates, or the altars of Persian idolatry.

Passing from Malachi into the Apocrypha, we find the divine seal of inspiration, "And God spake," "and God said," suddenly dropped; the Urim and Thum-

min of the divine presence are wanting; and the whole style and manner of expressions and thoughts, are abruptly changed. There is no more a "Thus saith the Lord," nor even the pretence of it. The contrast is as striking, as convincing, as that between the New Testament and the Apochryphal literature at a later period.

Yet the books of the Apochrypha refer back continually to the previous inspired histories and prophecies as the Word of God. And the truths of immortality and the resurrection are drawn *solely* from those histories, and from no Persian, or Platonic, or Egyptian sources of information.

And yet, to such depths have the oracles of divine truth been overlaid by human traditions, expelling their spiritual meaning, that even some historians of the Jewish Church aver that it was from the Persians that the Jews for the first time learned really to pray to God without images, having been taught a more spiritual worship like that of the Persians, *by dint of having their own Temple destroyed*; which destruction removed from their souls a veil of blindness, and taught them the omnipresence of the deity! The very unity of God, and the system of monotheistic worship, it is maintained by these authorities, came from the contact of the Jews with Cyrus and his court! "The Persian doctrine of the unity and in-

visibility of the divinity, and of a celestial and infernal hierarchy," says Stanley, "was substantially the counterpart to the corresponding elements of the Hebrew faith." "The great *innovation* of prayer as a *substitute* for *sacrifice*, thus took root in Jewish worship." "Hannah's devotion in the Temple" is referred to as "the first example of silent prayer." Stanley's *Hist. Jewish Church*, 3d series, Sect. 44, and pp. 46, 167, 208, 159, 206, 375. As if there could have been such a reality as the church of God without prayer, or a history of such a church without the triumphs of faith through prayer.

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### XXX.

#### FORMS OF PRAYER, AND GOD'S BENEVOLENT AND PROPHETIC DISCIPLINARY WORK WITH THEM UPON THE SOUL.

It is wonderful indeed to see how many experiences of our fallen, sinful, self-condemned nature are foreseen and provided for in the various forms of prayer scattered as Jacob's ladders, Bethels, or patriarchal and apostolic wells of living water, or altars of witnesses of God's love, through the Hebrew Scriptures. It is written in the prophets, "They shall be all taught of God. *Every man* therefore that



hath heard and learned of the Father COMETH TO ME." "They did all eat the *same spiritual meat*, and did all drink the *same spiritual drink*; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that went with them; and THAT ROCK WAS CHRIST." The habit of prayer was always the same habit of hungering and thirsting after righteousness, taught to the soul, if ever taught of God at all, out of the deep and painful experience of its own sinfulness.

The prayer of Moses for God's merciful forgiveness of the sin of idolatry in the people (Ex. xxxii. 30) (a prophetic atoning prayer, "Peradventure I shall make an atonement") that they might not for that sin be blotted out of God's Book; the prayer in the desert (Ps. xc.), for penetration of the soul with the lesson of our mortality; the prayer of David, the confession of guilt out of a broken heart and contrite spirit; the prayer for the kingdom of the Messiah in the 72d Psalm, prophetic and intercessory for the redemption of all mankind.

The prayer of Solomon in the Temple at its dedication, as God's HOUSE OF PRAYER for all nations; the prayers of Isaiah through foresight of Him "on whom the Lord hath laid the iniquities of us all"; the prayers of Habakkuk for the revival of God's work; the missionary prayers of the 67th Psalm and many similar in the books of the prophets.

The prayers out of the depths, the prayers from the ends of the earth when the heart is overwhelmed, the prayers to bring to remembrance God's forgiving mercy, the prayers committing the soul to God, the prayers for God's presence and light within the soul while living, the prayers for the Holy Spirit in dying, the prayers against the hiding of God's face from the soul, the prayers for the new creation of the heart, for entire deliverance from sin, for meekness and singleness of spirit, for God's heart-searching and cleansing grace, the prayers of souls thirsting after God, watching and waiting for Him, rejoicing in his forgiving love.

This spirit of prayer is the very breath of Messianic prophecy and praise. "Thy CHARIOTS WERE SALVATION." Wherever there is prayer there was the I AM, the divine Saviour, there the Holy Spirit the Comforter, and Intercessor, and there the promises in the covenant and rainbow prayers begun by Noah, Abraham, Job, and Jacob,\* and continued and perfected in the prayers of David, the Son of Jesse, to be set and

\* Dean Stanley says that the words of Jacob (Gen. xlix. 18), "I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord," were "*the battle cry of the tribe of Dan!*" A more signal instance of the frigid, sepulchral style of the Rationalizing Critics it would be difficult to select, unless it were when Haggai's "*Desire of Nations*" is construed as the passion of glory in silver and gold.

fulfilled as an endless example, by the Root and Offspring of David, *He that hath the Key of David*, and the keys of Hades and of death; "THY KINGDOM COME." "Prayer also shall be made for Him continually, and daily shall He be praised."—Ps. lxxii. 15. Renewed also and interpreted, in such a shaft of light and glory, in Is. xxv. 8, 9, concerning *His coming*, who will swallow up death in victory.

In order to know how much might have been seen by the lightning at midnight and amidst the storm, we must have been some time in the midnight and the storm ourselves. And we could never forget that which we beheld. What is so engraven on the soul is there forever. So Job exclaimed, beholding the lightning revelations of God's mercy to his soul amidst the blackness of the darkness of such a night, "Oh that my words were NOW WRITTEN! oh that they were printed in a book! That they were GRAVEN with an iron pen and lead in the rock FOREVER! FOR I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVETH!"

They *were* written, for the generations to come; and the great truths of immortality, the resurrection, and eternal life are there, for whomsoever of all the millions of our race it may be who desires to find them. And all the prayers of which we have examples are the breathings of hearts exactly such as our own, pouring forth the desires after God and

His salvation and glory, taught in their own souls by the indwelling and regenerating spirit of God. There is no other litany in the Word of God, than these yearnings after God's mercy in penitential hearts sensible of guilt. And no other key of entrance and command at God's throne, for the chief of sinners, but this, of Christ's announcement, Behold He prayeth!

Hence the argument as to the divine origin and nature of the old practical life of faith in God, in view of His eternity, so irresistibly convincing, in the manifest habit of prayer and sense of the Divine Presence indicated by the use of commemorative names for places, and for children, connected with God's providential and saving interpositions of mercy and love. Let any student of the Bible and of the undercurrent of God's revelations in it, take the Hebrew Lexicon and Concordance, and trace out the instances of chorographical, memorial, and baptismal names of men and places, recalling to the mind, everywhere, God and His salvation; he will find more than three hundred illustrations of this ingrained reverence and love for the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And he will note, (1) that it was not an appointed formalism; (2) not the name merely, but the spiritual attributes of Jehovah, called to mind; (3) especially, not merely the omnipresence

of God, but His *indwelling presence*, in and with the soul, the *secret* of His presence, and the experimental knowledge of His promises of salvation. He will see that this habit of speech and salutation (as in the manner of Boaz), could not possibly have come about, except from a personal fountain of intuition and communion with God, as well as the knowledge of His Word, as in the threefold blessing and commemoration of God, commanded in His Word by Moses, in Numbers vi. 22-27. All this was God's teaching by His own Spirit in the heart. Not only "By the Word of the Lord were these heavens made, but all the host of them *by the Spirit of His mouth.*" The 116th Psalm is an illustrious instance of the heart-felt combination of all these qualities of prayer, out of soul-troubles, even unto death; deliverance, commemoration, vows of gratitude, love, and endless confidence; promises and payment, *with the cup of salvation, and the sacrifice of thanksgiving, in the presence of all the people of God.*

The dedicating prayer of Solomon, a thousand years before Christ, is the glory of the Lord's forgiving love, filling the Temple. The light of this prayer, ascending in the history, floods the whole nation with divine intelligence, and the whole record of events before and after with God's presence, God's love, and the knowledge of it. The historical and

prophetic Scriptures are all illuminated and interpreted by it.

There is the same governing and explaining light that we have seen kindled in the third chapter of Ecclesiastes. It is as a tunnel through the Alps, lighted with electricity like the sunshine, saturating even the hidden gold and quartz veins with demonstration of a spiritual life. There are indeed inter-regnums and revolutions in the spiritual as in the chronological history.

But where do we get the governing certainties and glories of this spiritual interpretation, and where was the beginning of this highest, brightest, and truest of all mysticisms? It was only in the revealed presence and omnipresence of Jehovah. Without the assurance of that, where could there be the belief or the knowledge of the power of prayer, or the habit of the life of faith accordingly? "He that cometh to God must believe (1) that He is, and (2) that He is a rewarder (3) of those who diligently seek Him." There never could have been piety without prayer, or faith in God without seeking Him in prayer. "Ye shall seek Me and find Me, when ye shall seek for Me with all your hearts."

We call to mind the supplication of Moses to God, when God had threatened to leave the rebellious people to themselves and let them find their own

way, if they could, to a land of plenty. "And Moses said, If THY PRESENCE go not with us, carry us not up hence. I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory." Ex. xxxiii. 15, 18.

THY PRESENCE! It is a most profound and magnificent abstraction, revealing an infinitude of spiritual light, even in the comparatively little knowledge of God already in possession of the soul. If God's presence were wanting, of what account were all the visions of earthly good? It was not long life, not the promised land, not houses and vineyards, nor a throne, nor a kingdom, nor any thing in this world, but God only, in them, and with them, and among them! And if not God's gift thus, of Himself, giving Himself, then nothing.

And what indeed, would be a future life, without God's presence? In that, and *only that*, is Immortality desirable, or can be possessed. Where God is, there is a future existence, there is heaven, there is eternal life. But without that, let us rather drop and be forgotten. Annihilation were better, than to live on, forsaken of God.

"And God said, My Presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." Rest in God! It makes us think of the words of a devout poet—

"Who wants the place where God doth dwell  
Partakes already half of hell."

If this meant only Palestine, and a quiet possession and home and comfort and contentment there, Moses never reached it, and his prayer was never answered, but he and Aaron were shut out, forever.

But it meant what grew into a river and a sea by successive revelations from generation to generation and from prophet to prophet, all looking back to this fervent prayer and divine promise as their fountain. It meant the 90th Psalm, God our dwelling place in all generations from everlasting to everlasting.

It meant the 36th Psalm, "With Thee is the Fountain of Life," and the 16th, "In Thy presence is fulness of joy, and at Thy right hand are pleasures for evermore." And the 139th, "Whither shall I flee from Thy Presence?" And the 42d, "His *presence*, our *salvation*." And the 51st, "Cast me not away from Thy Presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me."

And so the stream of this revelation grew on, broadened, deepened, till lost in Him in whom believing we are filled with all the fulness of God, and from whom by faith receiving the water of life, it becomes in us a well of water springing up to everlasting life; the life a life divine, and the peace and rest the peace of God that passeth all understanding.

These interjected lights, these shafts of eternal mercy amidst such depths and tragedies of human



guilt and misery, these sudden flashings of divine purpose, will, and holy compassionate meaning; cloud-rifts and cleansing lightnings of heaven through a chaos of sin and woe; lights revealing and consonant with the whole atmosphere and law of gravitation for the soul towards God; these are the things that lighten the whole earth with His glory.

His history of our fall, His interpositions to save us from our sins, are demonstrations, the belief and grateful acceptance of which are the beginnings of all possibility of spiritual life and health; and thenceforward piety is in the confession of guilt, the prayer for pardon, the faith in God's forgiving mercy, and the life obedient out of love. We come to the book of Psalms, in the centre of these orbs of history, law, prophecy and prayer, and it is heaven opened, angels ascending and descending, thoughts, aspirations, activities, celestial forces, a life *on* earth, that is not *of* earth, but an inner life of holy desires, praise, worship, reverence, contrition, adoration, joy, supplication and weeping; thoughts of God and man, that could come only from God, and are uttered before Him. And the light of this book irradiates the whole surrounding spiritual universe and explains its mysteries, in the submission of man's reason to God's wisdom and will, and of man's heart to the influences and methods of God's love. It is at once Law and

Life, Reason and Faith, Logic and Love; a law-book, and at the same time a life-book, even after violation of the law; a commentary and a song, angels and men studying the same text, rapt in the same praises, but all true piety in men, since the history of the fall setting out with the penitential confession of guilt and the cry for pardon; and one of the sweetest, most grateful and exultant of all psalms beginning with that in which God hath "*magnified His Word above all His name,*" "Bless the Lord O my soul, who FORGIVETH ALL THINE INIQUITIES:" God in Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and forever, inhabiting the contrite heart and inspiring its praises, even as He doth eternity.

How wonderfully and mercifully educating, instructing and sanctifying, for imitation, practice and encouragement, the varied forms of intercourse with God thus recorded. What human being, since our Lord on earth prayed for all souls that through Him would believe in a prayer-hearing God but may find some foot-worn path of tearful supplication, a way that the most sinful soul may successfully take to bring him to God's mercy-seat, accepted through Christ. What path from Job downwards that hath not been trodden for the benefit of generations yet to come. And from Adam to our day, never yet an era of human life out of which there hath not ascended

to God this common universal acknowledgment of His being, providence and grace.

Some of these prayers are but the stammerings of a child. Yet out of the mouth of babes and sucklings God is always perfecting praise, to still the Enemy and Avenger. If we will but learn the *a, b, c*, God will soon put our souls into two syllables, and then teach us speedily whole sentences. And in them we find, travelling from Moses to Paul, an introduction to the hidden glories kept secret from the foundation of the world, until revealed through Christ's death and resurrection by the Holy Spirit in the heart. From the 90th Psalm to the second chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians is fifteen hundred years in time, with successive eras of ever increasing illumination. And yet, when we step into the flaming chariot of Paul's prayer, we find that thus only we begin to understand that of Moses in the wilderness, "I beseech Thee show me Thy glory! Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants and Thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us; and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us, yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it." The talismanic phrases of Paul could be given to the mind with foresight of their meaning only by the same Divine Spirit that taught Moses; and the Interpreter is never absent from the inspira-

tion, wherever there is a watching, believing, praying heart, and Christ conversing with it.

Now to deny that the Old Hebrews prayed, that they knew how to pray, is to deny that they ever were the people of God, that they ever possessed one element of piety acceptable to Him; it is to affirm that they were not so much idolaters as atheists. Yet their habits both in faith and prayer are set forth as our best and safest examples. If a meteor from another world had burst up on this, our analytic chemists could tell us what were the organizing elements of that world; and so, from the fragments of the Old Testament supplications we can tell the piety that then and there prevailed and that it was a fervent, prayerful, penitential belief in the same God and Saviour, whom we ourselves believe and trust in the gospels. Prayer is the one central element and demonstration of all spiritual life; and to deny that the old Hebrews knew how to pray is to deny that God had ever even been revealed to them. But these prayers, and the invitations, commands, and promises to those who seek God according to His revealed Word, are as rivers of the Water of Life, for every thing of soul sustenance and communion with God is in them. They trace a spiritual life and faith rising in the fountain of God's love, and running through green pastures of purest sympathy with God and good-will to men.

Now the very beginning and absolute *Pou Sto* of all just and infallible reasoning is from Christ's words in the New Testament to God's words in the Old. He who is himself the Way, the Truth, the Life, leads, justifies, constrains us, in this reasoning.

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XXXI.

BELYING THE WORD OF THE LORD A MODERN  
FORM OF BLASPHEMY AND CRUELTY.

But the natural man *receiveth not* the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, for they are *foolishness* unto him. The key-notes of this divine revelation touch no melodies in his soul, command no answering strains of belief and sympathy. There is neither open vision, nor sympathetic nor creative faith.

“Earth's crammed with heaven,”

exclaims Mrs. Browning,

“And every common bush afire with God:  
But only he who sees, takes off his shoes:  
The rest sit round it, and—*pluck blackberries.*”

There are but few that have spirituality of mind enough even to turn aside that they may see what meaneth the heat of this great anger, or what the

glory of this supernatural fire. Few that ask, where did he get that prayer, that principle, that lightning disclosure from Eternity? Few that say with wondering Jacob, Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. These "*blackberry critics*" turn the whole Word of God into infinite *foolishness* for the natural man; and therein claim for themselves, in behalf of all defrauded men who follow their counsels, the curses against the man that removeth his neighbor's landmark, that maketh the blind to wander out of the way, that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow, that putteth a stumbling-block before the blind. These reckless scholars teaching men that art of "*belying the Word of the Lord,*" that had come to such perfection even twenty-five hundred years ago, and is renewed now, two thousand years after the light of the gospels, flooding all nations, are truly "the children of them that *killed the prophets.* They shut up the kingdom of heaven against men, taking away the keys thereof, neither entering themselves, nor suffering those that are entering to go in."—Matt. xxiii. 13, 31. What wonder at our Lord's terrific denunciations of such hardened spiritual impiety and cruelty?

"I heard an angel speak last night:

From the summits of LOVE a curse is driven

As lightning is from the tops of heaven."

The denying of the Lord Jesus in the Old Testament, the putting out of the lights there kindled and cloud-pillared by God's mercy for mankind, the distortion and erasure of the traces and seals of Messiahship (Emmanuel, God with us), the elaborate painful destruction of the drawings, the colors, the pen-strokes and blood-red engravings, just as when skilful manipulators and forgers of wills annihilate figures and signatures by chemical processes, and then insert words and meanings of their own; this devastating process, excluding Christ, whose presence was declared by Himself to have been the one indwelling life that alone rendered the Old Testament of any value, and made it a fountain of life, the power of healing and salvation for the soul; who but Christ Himself in love to mankind, could describe its wickedness? Language can not tell the terrible malignity of such a proceeding. If devils could take the oxygen from our air, the sunshine and its power of sustaining life from God's light, leaving us to grope through the earth in the blackness of darkness, even this would be but a faint image of the blasphemy against God, and the cruelty against man, inseparable from such a work. To think of scholars making it the business of their life, the support of their professorships, the attraction for their students, to prove that there never was a divine Saviour, nor ever a need of Him! Mak-

ing their living by running the machineries of destruction and death! It makes one think of the wonderful forbearance of God and of Cotta's old argument urged against the doctrine of a divine providence, that such a man as Caius Marius could die in a good old age in the career of his seventh consulship! Mysterious indeed that God should ever have permitted His Word to be handled by men, the whole aim of whose critical learning is to make Christ Crucified to the Jews a stumbling-block and to the Greeks foolishness!

The whole work is worse than Uzziah's attempted intrusion into the very presence chamber of the King of kings. God our Father, Christ our Saviour, the Holy Spirit our Sanctifier, denied, "trampled under foot, put to an open shame." David said, "I will praise Thy name, O God, for Thy loving kindness and Thy truth, for Thou hast magnified Thy Word above all Thy name." But these critics blaspheme this manifestation of God more perversely than any other revelations of His glory; and the utmost learning, earnestness and genius can only exasperate the evil and give countenance to the spiritual plague, so that, in the Bible for learners and the Encyclopedia for scholars we find it given free course and glorified.

"Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take Me? I sat daily with you in the Temple, teaching you, and ye laid no hands



on Me." Do you criticise the Divine Word as a surgeon would the leper? It is as if Abraham had arrested the angels as tramps, and carried them away to the nearest station house. It is as if a living, healthy person were laid out on the dissecting table, and cut up to demonstrate disease.

The severity with which Prof. Tayler Lewis has treated this style of criticism can not be regarded as uncharitable by any one who considers the value of the truth and the infinite importance and majesty of its evidence thus by these men distorted and denied. The accusations brought against the Old Testament writers by these critics destroy all right and reason on their part for referring to any of the prophets *as authorities* at all, either in support of their own theories, or against what they call traditionary myths. With what prodigious power has Prof. Lewis in his *excursus* on the forty-ninth chapter of Genesis, and his profoundly thoughtful, holy, and learned notes and essays on Job, demonstrated this consequence; the annihilating effect of their own accusations upon themselves. "It is usual," says he, "for this Higher Criticism to speak, or affect to speak, with great respect of the Hebrew prophets as very sincere and honest men, upright, professing a stern morality, in advance of their age, etc.; but what are they on this hypothesis, of the forgery of Isaiah's name for ex-

ample, and the stealing of his reputation as their own, but base liars, conscious, circumstantial liars, yea, the boldest as well as the most impious of blasphemers!"

For it can not be denied that our Saviour Christ Himself is involved in the same blasphemy. And these critics set themselves openly in company with those scribes and Pharisees of the Jews, who came in a body to Pilate, when Christ had been crucified, saying, "Sir, we remember that THAT DECEIVER said, while He was yet alive, after three days I WILL RISE AGAIN." It was their creed of sincere blasphemy, which they intended, with Pilate's co-operation, and by large money given to the soldiers, to have fastened on the world, establishing the story of the resurrection as an apostolic conspiracy and fraud.

Wonderful stupidity, amidst all their cunning, that they did not perceive how, for Pilate's satisfaction, and that of all generations after him, ever asking, What is truth? they established for all time, wherever the gospels should be preached, this undisputed fact that Christ, long before His crucifixion, had predicted it, and His descent into the grave, and His resurrection. And wonderful the accordance of these words with those of the angels at the empty sepulchre, "He is not here, but is risen. *Remember how He spake unto you*, saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men

and be crucified, and the third day rise again." *They remembered His words*, and the proofs of their divineness;—so did the scribes and Pharisees, reporting them to Pilate, with a profane historic seal set by themselves for all ages, and by enmity securing them.

THAT DECEIVER! It was the inscription that they would have dictated to Pilate in large letters of Greek and Hebrew and Latin over the cross, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THAT DECEIVER. It is the title under which the rationalistic criticism of modern scientific thought introduces Him to the whole world, to the youthful mind and heart, to the student even of the gospels. If this tide of blasphemy under assumption of historic accuracy and sincere high-minded doubt, could have its wished for way, and passing through our common schools and colleges enter our theological seminaries, and leave the silt and deposit of such prepossessions for one generation, a hundred years of penitential sorrow could not, except by the grace of God, bring back the common mind to such simplicity and humility of spirit as would fit it to receive in loving faith the image of the Saviour in the New Testament.

## XXXII.

THE WORD OF GOD CRUCIFIED BETWEEN TWO THIEVES  
—CONSEQUENCES OF SUCH SCEPTICISM—MIRACLES  
OF LYING ADMITTED TO BALANCE THE MIRACLES OF  
GOD, AND PUT ON THE SAME FOOTING OF SINCER-  
ITY—TESTIMONIES OF THE 19th AND 119th PSALMS.

This treatment of the Son of God, the Personal Word Incarnate, in the process of the first crucifixion, by the High Priests and rulers of the Jews, is renewed at this day by intelligent scoffers, who have “crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame”; “who have trodden under foot the Son of God, and counted the blood of the covenant wherewith He was sanctified an unholy thing.”—Heb. vi. x. Even so these scholars set the Word between two thieves; they number it with transgressors; they accuse it by false witnesses of blasphemy, forgery, sorcery, and lying; they cover it with scorn, they crown it with thorns, they attend every step towards the Cross with revilings. They command their historical recorders to “Write not, THE KING OF THE JEWS, but that *He said, I am*, knowing that He was not. Write that He lied.” Then they make the sepulchre sure, having embalmed the body as a mummy, at Pilate’s com-

mand, sealing the stone and setting a watch. An example of such treatment is to be found in the "Encyclopedia Britannica" in the article on the word BIBLE. It is a mere *resumé* of the speculations and conjectures of infidel critics; a primer of the creed of second-hand rationalism for the use of those who can not read German authorities in the original. Yet there it stands as a professed believer's description of the Christian Scriptures; a caricature of sacred truth as nothing better than anonymous plagiarism!

The spirit of such scepticism is as a malaria contracted from the habit of digging drains in poisonous valleys, or mining for gold in arsenical localities. John Bunyan has set Demas, spade in hand, at such grounds, inviting passers-by to come and see and enrich themselves. If we ask Christ to go out of the country as a sorcerer, and search the Scriptures to prove *them* the work of impostors, the devils themselves will assume the texts, out of which we have endeavored to exorcise the truth of God, and entering into our souls will carry us down steep places into the abyss. There is a formidable precedent of such retribution in kind. "They have belied the Lord, and said, It is not He, neither shall evil come upon us. Wherefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and

it shall devour them.”—Jer. v. 12, 14. God’s meaning can be gotten only from God’s words; and God’s words must be accepted and believed as His, or both the meaning and the words are denied as a forgery.

Although the things recorded in the gospels are such as God’s omniscience alone could have certified, yet we find men continually seeking some source of information other than divine, some human witness to rely upon, that may render the divine unnecessary. Strange inconsistency, and unaccountable unwillingness to depend on God, our only fountain of immutable and soul-saving truth. Who could reveal God’s thoughts, or Christ’s knowledge of them, and of His own mind, but the Spirit of God only? This is Paul’s argument of an infallible inspiration both of thoughts and words. It is incontestible. Take for instance, in Matt. xiv. 23, a single example among many such of an incident, the knowledge of which could have been obtained only from the Lord Jesus. Whenever and by whomsoever recorded, *it must have been by revelation and inspiration from Him*; for He only knew, when He had sent the multitudes away, that He Himself went up into a mountain to pray, and that when the evening was come He was there alone. The record of these facts was never from tradition, or information by any witness, or from any one to whom the Lord had told that He went up into the mountain to pray,

and was there alone; yet it was inspired by the Holy Spirit to be set down in this gospel by Matthew, for the instruction of all mankind in all ages. It was a thing known to not a single human being, for its relation was a part of Christ's hidden life of communion with God, revealed by the inspiring Spirit, as essential to a full manifestation of Christ in this divine, infallible, perfect testimony of His fulness; according with John's declaration in his gospel, xx. 31.

Of the same nature is the record in Matt. xxi. 23-27. The reasoning of the chief priests and elders among themselves is *supposed* by Alford to have been *originally reported* by Nicodemus or Joseph of Arimathea, But why resort to such a supposition, when the Holy Spirit must have presented these details of truth to the mind of the evangelist as a part of the inspired record of Christ's life, in a fulness and divine certainty such as no human testimony could have commanded or conveyed?

In the divine Word nothing rests upon conjecture. But outside of it we behold conjectural intermeddlers and interpreters ranging up and down for hundreds of years to find places where they can fix their theodolites, their surveying instruments. Nay, from Moses to Malachi they are seeking rest and finding none, but with a constant contradiction and dispute among themselves.

Now by contrast read II Cor. ii. 17, "For we are not as many, who corrupt the Word of God, but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, speak we in Christ." *Corrupting*, *καπηλεύοντες*, *adulterating*, to make profit by such infecting admixture of the human and uncertain with the divine. Even as the sellers of worthless seed, or of chicory in place of coffee, or of oak-bark instead of Peruvian, or of Dead Sea asphaltum instead of balm of Gilead, plaster of Paris instead of wheaten flour, apples of Sodom instead of the Bread of Life.

But we, *as of sincerity*, *ελλικρινείας*, as of sunshining judgment, or *criticism in the sunlight*, as of God, and in the sight of God, speak we in Christ.

*Speak we in Christ.* This is very remarkable. It is the closing seal; and for this certainty, beyond which God Himself doth not go, "we have THE MIND OF CHRIST."—I Cor. ii. 16.

Now to meet these impugnors of the sincerity and truth of God's Word on their own ground, reasoning from their standpoint of suspicion, is to invite and justify scepticism instead of preventing it. To say that their reasonings and conclusions may possibly be true, is the same as to say that it is possible that falsehood and forgery may be the truth, and that divine truth may be the very falsehood that these sceptical critics pretend to demonstrate.



But we can not in equity put divine truth and human error on the same footing of antecedent probability and sincerity, and say of the most groundless and irreverent speculations, All this of course is possibly correct. It would be as wise to conclude that delirium tremens may possibly be the normal and rational action of the brain, while the calm and temperate conclusions of the man in perfect health may be the conditions of drunkenness and insanity. Some men reason as if the believers that the Scriptures are God's infallible Word are to be treated as the lunatics, and the deniers of God's Word accredited as the only sure prophets and teachers of mankind. But what says the apostle? "SPEAK WE IN CHRIST."

What Christ Himself declared to be God's Word, we can not set aside as man's forgery. Contrariwise, for the honor of the Word of God, and in obedience to the claim and example of the Lord Jesus in reasoning from that Word, it is our axiom, our sanity, the postulate of a perfect reason, to receive it as known and settled, and to trust and obey God in it. In showing that it is *not* man's forgery, in demonstrating the falsehood of any learned writer's attempt to prove it a mistake, we can not suppose *any possibility* of its being a forgery. Christ never admitted such a supposition; the apostles never did; but on the contrary postulated the *certainty* of the Scriptures as being

“*without controversy;*” a revelation in form and verity as undeniable as the sun, moon and stars; both the written Word and the created heavens as incontrovertible as the Being of God. The deniers of either are set forth, not as reasoners, to be met with the admission that their theory may possibly be correct, but as fools and liars against both conscience and God.

In proving the truths of astronomy against chance and atheism, men of genuine science can not admit that of course the deniers of God and of the creation *may possibly be right*, and if so, the demonstrations of astronomy must be wrong. But the Word of God is not less absolutely certain than His works. A Divine Christ, and all that follows upon His Divinity, are not less absolute and established than the solar system. We rightfully say that any persons denying the reality of the sun, and maintaining that it was from the beginning a delusion, a fraud upon men’s senses, gotten up by lecturers, or grown up out of traditional myths, are so far forth insane, and fit subjects for treatment in a lunatic asylum.

There are only two visible realities known to the human mind, God’s Works and God’s Word. The nineteenth Psalm is a demonstration, setting forth, first the Works, second the Word, as equally and uncontestably the known witnesses for God, the Word as well known as the Works. The quantities and

qualities of both parts of the comparison are infallible. First, the heavens declare, the firmament showeth forth, day and night speak. Second, the law of the Lord, perfect, converting the soul,—testimonies, statutes, commandments, judgments;—no more doubt what they are, and where written, than what the sun is, and where set and seen in his going forth and his circuit. The sun speaks to the same mind, through the senses; the written word speaks to the soul, as infallibly, but more profoundly. The 119th Psalm is an enlargement, analysis and illustration of the 19th, as the centre of a crystal is seen by polarized light. So, the written Word is as a succession of lenses or prisms of continually increasing power, each successive illumination at once explaining what goes before, and throwing greater light upon the future.

The 119th Psalm is an eminent example of the nature of that prayerful meditation on the Divine Law, which was required of king, priest, and people, by the Lawgiver, and was announced to be the only way of understanding its meaning, in order to obey God, and attain holiness and life. But if the law itself was only “secular,” and contained no revelation of forgiveness through Christ, no foreshowing of His atoning sacrifice, no revelation of a future life, or of the soul’s responsibility to God as everlasting; then the prayers, meditations, and studies demanded were worthless

chaff, unworthy both of God and man. But the meditations of which this psalm is such an exquisite example, were of thoughts and things in that case not required by the law, not at all to be discovered in it, but altogether superior to it; a piety infinitely above that of the law, and profound and heavenly beyond all precedent.

But this psalm does not refer to any tradition or rule of heart, or of external morality, *outside the law*, nor to any other *authority for the conscience* towards God. It knows nothing but God's Word, God's written commandments, as the fountain of wisdom, the guide and protector of the soul. "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord."

And these divine experiences, whenever and wherever we find them, in any age, are God's incontestable vouchers for His written Word. Wherever there is discovered the love of God and man, there God has been working with His Word and Spirit, upon and in the human soul. There is the knowledge of God's salvation, and the heart hungering and thirsting after God. And wherever there is the seeking of Him by His Word, there is the finding of Him. For eternally "with Thee is the fountain of life, and in Thy light shall we see light."

The law was ceremonial, ritual, sacrificial, spiritual, in its fixtures, types, precepts, worship, prayers and

praises. It presented the way of acceptance with God, through a divine atoning Saviour, by remission of sins, through His blood, by pardoning grace through faith in God's mercy, sought with the confessions of the penitent soul.

“My faith would lay her hand  
On that dear head of thine,  
While like a penitent I stand  
And there confess my sin.”

The language of Watts' exquisite lyric, applied to the types of Christ among the Old Hebrews, and to their knowledge of the sacred everlasting meaning, as taught by the Spirit at the mercy seat, is not exaggerated. *I have waited for Thy salvation*, was no mere figure of speech with Jacob on his dying bed, nor with Moses in the wilderness; but that salvation was the indwelling light and glory of the Lord, yesterday, today, and forever, by the Divine Spirit revealing it.

“Thy testimonies are wonderful; therefore doth my soul keep them. Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Thy law is the truth. The righteousness of Thy testimonies is everlasting; give me understanding, and I shall live. Thy Word is true *from the beginning*, and every one of Thy righteous judgments *endureth forever*. I have longed for *Thy salvation*, O Lord, and Thy law is my delight.”

These things are true, *only* as they are spiritually true. The testimonies of the law are *not* wonderful, if only of this world, but are nugatory, trifling, burthensome, if there is no eternal meaning in them. The righteousness is *not* an everlasting righteousness, if only of this life. The testimonies did *not* endure forever, if there was no immortality in them, as there certainly was not, nor any immortal meaning, if given to creatures who had no knowledge of their own immortality, nor of any virtue or reward beyond the grave. It was unutterable scorn, irony, cruelty, if commands were laid on creatures who could by no possibility understand their meaning, nor apprehend their own responsibility in regard to them, nor be made to know and appreciate their solemn weight, any more than men born blind could be made to know colors. "Beware that you act always with reference to the red or the violet, or the whole rainbow, on pain of misery and ruin," would be a direction quite as rational to a man born blind, as "*Act for another life,*" would be to men without the knowledge of immortality.

This knowledge was ever an accumulating power of the Divine Revelation, which indeed was nothing without it; no foretold Saviour without it, nor any possibility of foretelling or typifying Him, or making men feel His worth, or their need of Him. The

knowledge of guilt by the law, both of duty and sacrifice, was always foretelling Christ, from Adam to Abraham, from Abraham to Moses, from Moses to Christ; an accumulation of experience and belief in every successive stage of God's disclosures to mankind.\*

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### XXXIII.

BELIEF IN CHRIST DOES AWAY WITH UNCERTAINTIES—PAUL'S METHOD WITH THE ROMANS AND GALATIANS—NO APOLOGY FOR THE POSITIVENESS OF THE SCRIPTURES EVER IMAGINED OR ATTEMPTED—REFERENCES TO THE WHOLE OF ISAIAH AS BEING ONE AND THE SAME INSPIRED BOOK, BY ONE AND THE SAME AUTHOR.

Since Christ has come, and died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and was buried, and rose again, according to the Scriptures, we have done with uncertainties and things that could be shaken. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." Matt. xxiv. 35. "What I tell you in darkness that speak ye in light; and what ye

\* See on this subject the admirable and satisfactory reasoning of Dr. W. L. Alexander in his second and third "Congregational Lectures, on the Doctrine of a Future State in the Old Testament, and on the Criteria of Messianic Prophecy."

hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the li<sup>spiritually</sup>  
 Matt. x. 27. It is therefore the PRIMAL <sup>wonderful,</sup>  
*canon of a just criticism, that we accept and pre<sup>3</sup>, bur-*  
*Scriptures as Christ and His apostles pressed them,*<sup>them.</sup>  
 hesitatingly, doubtfully, or apologetically, but ag-  
 gressively, "boldly, as we ought to speak," from God,  
 as God's Word, not man's, I Thess. ii. 13; "bringing  
 into captivity *every thought to the obedience of Christ.*"  
 II Cor. x. 5. "Not handling the Word of God deceit-  
 fully, but by *manifestation of the truth, commending our-*  
*selves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.*"  
 II Cor. iv. 2. "All this, for *obedience to the faith among*  
*all nations, for His (Christ's) name.*" Rom. i. 5. We  
 know that the SON OF GOD IS COME, and hath given us  
 an understanding, that we MAY KNOW HIM THAT IS TRUE;  
 and we are in Him that is true, even in His SON Je-  
 sus Christ. THIS IS THE TRUE GOD AND ETERNAL LIFE."  
 I John v. 20.

With the same awful and adjuring certainty Paul  
 speaks those solemn words to the Galatians, i. 8, 9,  
 11, 12—"Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach  
 any other gospel unto you than that which we have  
 preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said  
 before, so say I now again, If any man preach any  
 other gospel unto you than that ye have received,  
 let him be accursed. But I certify you, brethren, that  
 the gospel which was preached of me is not after



man. For I neither received it of men, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Nothing but a known infallible inspiration could have justified this; nothing less could have constrained the Galatians to admit its truth as indisputable.

The same is the indestructible logic of Paul in the comparison of Rom. iii. 5, 6, and Gen. xviii. 25, with Rom. xiv. 10, 11, and Isa. xlv. 23, concerning the certainty, equity, and individuality of God's judgment of mankind. Paul quotes Abraham, David, and Isaiah, for the certainty that we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. So then, adds Paul, after God's oath as given in Isaiah, "*as I live, saith the Lord,*" synonymous with, "I have sworn by myself,"—so then, "every one of us shall give account of himself to God." The incidental proofs, and coincidental, from Abraham to Christ, of a verbal inspiration, omniscient, infallible, are decisive. And more notably than any thing else, here is a deduction by Paul from one of the very chapters of Isaiah pronounced by rationalists to have been a forgery; a deduction in God's name, from Isaiah's own writing, in that chapter, as the Lord's own words, of so infinitely important a truth, that it could be known only by God's written revelation.

Of the same nature is the method of Paul with the objector in Rom. ix. 20, covering *the whole Scriptures*;

not the shadow of a doubt intimated as to the undeniable authority and righteous sovereignty of those Scriptures. The postulate assumed by the apostle is this, that the Scriptures are God Himself speaking to mankind.

“NAY, BUT O MAN, WHO ART THOU THAT REPLIEST AGAINST GOD?” This is Paul’s argument of absolute, unqualified LOYALTY TO GOD. It is not a resort to *avoid* argument, or to supply the place of demonstration; nor is it the evasion of a difficulty, as by a fire-escape from a building in flames. But it is submission to the highest reason; and to this incontestable truth, namely, that God has spoken, and that these written pages of the Old Testament, to which the apostle brings all his own reasonings to be tested and decided, are the ultimate and supreme appeal, the very Word of God, the reasoning of God, not to be gainsayed, nor the absolute justice and authority of it questioned. It may be, it *must* be, in some respects, *inscrutable*, but not therefore to be denied. In this *single chapter* Paul quotes from and refers to Moses, Genesis, Exodus, Psalms, Isaiah, Hosea, Joel, Nahum, Jeremiah and Malachi; a most remarkable, incontrovertible concentration of Divine testimonies!

“*Repliest against God!*” Observe the underlying granite on which Paul thus rests all things, all the upbuildings of human reasoning. It is this, namely,

that the Scriptures are "*God Himself speaking,*" and consequently that men who argue against them are disputing not a doubtful record, but *God's own Words*. There is no apology imagined or attempted, no supposition of a possible uncertainty or mistake; but there is the affirmation of its being God's Word, along with the certainty that it is impossible for God to lie. To this impossibility Paul elsewhere refers, in considering the particular promises of God, on which the whole possibility of our salvation rests, as for example, in Heb. vi. 12-20. To the same purpose, compare II Peter i. 4, 16, 21, and II Cor. i. 20-22, and ii. 17, and I Cor. ii. 4, 5. All these quotations proceed on the same divine principle as the last, namely, that "your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

The same argument is very strong (the more so for being incidental), contained in Romans xv. 4-21. "For *whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope.*" "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision FOR THE TRUTH OF GOD, TO CONFIRM THE PROMISES MADE UNTO THE FATHERS, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy, AS IT IS WRITTEN, For this cause I will confess to Thee among the Gentiles and sing unto Thy name" (Ps. xviii. 49). And again HE SAITH (Deut.

xxxii. 43), and again (Ps. cxvii. 1), and again, *Esaias saith* (Is. xi. 1, 10). "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."

This particular bundle of quotations closes, very significantly, with one from Is. lii. 15, under this formula, *But as it is written*, the formula of God's Word. Nothing less than a plenary verbal inspiration is demonstrated in this reasoning, so far as such inspiration was requisite for the complete infallible conveyance of all the truth necessary for the fulfilment of God's promises in the salvation of the soul. And it is remarkable that here, as elsewhere, Paul quotes equally from the earlier and later chapters of Isaiah, as being the same unquestionable Word of God, by the same inspired writer.

We have therefore in our possession, *beyond dispute*, what God has revealed: (a) infallible because it is God's Word; and (b) what God has said can not be contradicted, as if it were fallible; for (c) *it is impossible for God to lie*. The supposition therefore of this Word not being divinely inspired, *not God's Word*, and consequently that it may properly be reasoned against as false or mistaken, has two points or qualities of blasphemy. (1) It is accusing God of injustice (why doth he yet find fault?) if it be admitted that this is

the Word of God; (2) of lying, if it be asserted that this is *not* His Word. For it is an axiom determined by Christ, and reasoned from by John, "that he that believeth not *the record that God gave of His Son*, hath made God a liar." The record is known; the man that disputes it disputes God, and he who denies it denies God; not simply affirms that He is mistaken, but makes Him a liar.

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XXXIV.

GOD'S OWN VOUCHERS UNIMPEACHABLE, CUMULATIVE, AND STILL EVOLVING FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION.

The study of the human eye does not more certainly demonstrate an infallible designing and omnipotent mind, than the study of the Scriptures an infallible and omniscient INSPIRER AND TRUTH-TELLER. And God's vouchers for the truth of His Word are among all proofs ever addressed to the human reason the most infallible, the most incontrovertible, the most judiciously grounded and reasonably accepted, and confirmed, of all things known in history and science, whether moral or physical. They are (first of all), PROPHEPIC; the undisputed record of *predictions*, out

of which, and *because* of which, the events took place that have changed the face and state of the whole world; their fulfilment demonstrating the infallible truth and presence of God through every step of the process. (2), Providential, and successively evolved by far-off long-working, and sometimes secret or unnoticed causes, that at length come forth in majesty and power; the successions known and visible, and as important and indivisible, as the knitting of ball-and-socket joints, or the vertebræ in the human anatomy. (3), Both historical and monumental, as of the work of creation, finished with man created in God's image, and the seventh day blessed and sanctified, as the memorial epoch of God's rest, and the governing day of man's worship, and as such, set in the Decalogue. Then (4), the sovereign authority and lordship of that day, assumed by the Son of God, on earth and in heaven, as LORD OF THE SABBATH, for the work of man's new creation and redemption.

Already, that divine authority, and Christ's omnipotence and omniscience in declaring it, are facts of history, fulfilling His predictions, that could neither have been conceived nor uttered by any mere man, nor sanctioned by the event, but from God. Then (5), historic, prophetic, commemorative, and disciplinary all at once, of individual character, and national industry and trust in God, as in the wonderful

jubilee enactments; so that the seventh day was a jubilee of rest and freedom for God's praise, and the seventh year a jubilee of liberty and love, and the fiftieth year, a jubilee of jubilees, such as no uninspired thought ever could have imagined, and none but a divinely authorized lawgiver would have ever dared to promulgate; but in all of which, if the people would but rest on God, God would renew and perpetuate His miraculous protection of them in the sight of all nations. Connected with these, and parts of the same system, the personal freedom-enactments, forbidding slavery, and the land-owning policies and laws of estates never to be alienated, with the vast results depending upon the people's faithfulness to them, or disobedience of them. These are shown with great power, in comparing Ex. xxi. 2, xxiii. 10, 11, 12, and Deut. xv. 12, with Jer. xxxiv. 13-17, and xxv. 11, and II Chron. xxxvi. 21, and Lev. xxv. 2-22, and xxvi. 34, 35, 43. Let all these passages be compared with Daniel ix. 2, and let it be considered with what irresistible strength of conviction the phrase in Leviticus and Chronicles of "THE LAND ENJOYING HER SABBATHS," a phrase illuminated in Babylon like the handwriting on Belshazzar's palace, must have grasped and fired the conscience of the people. For they wept in anguish beneath the punishment of their sins, by the terrific judgments of God for their disobedience of

His commands, and idolatrous distrust of His protection.\*

If the Jews neglected to keep the jubilees commanded of God, and had so profaned the sacredness both of land and law, to the amount of seventy years, thus denying the authority and righteousness of God's own statutes, and setting an example of contempt and infidelity in the sight of all the surrounding nations, who were always watching the Hebrews with idolatrous hatred and jealousy, God would certainly, according to His predictions by Moses, punish them *in*

\* The personification in Leviticus is that of a holy woman, consecrated to God's service and glory, *but defrauded of her Sabbaths, and so of her sacred worship and rest.* Because of this desecration and denial of God, "your land shall be desolate and your cities waste. Then shall the land *enjoy her Sabbaths*, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; then shall the land rest, and enjoy her Sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; *because it did not rest in your Sabbaths when ye dwelt upon it.* Therefore, they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' land. The land also shall be left *of them*, and shall enjoy her Sabbaths, while she lieth desolate *without them*: and *they* shall accept of the punishment of *their iniquity*: because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes."—Lev. xxvi. "To fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, *until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths*: for as long as she lay desolate, she kept her Sabbath *to fulfil three score and ten years.*" II Chron. xxxvi. 21.



*kind*, and openly, and would make it known as clear as the sun why He did it. The soil illegally, unbelievably and selfishly tilled, without tithes for God and the poor, through seventy years, and the Sabbaths polluted, and God and the world robbed and defrauded, and idolatry preferred and sanctioned, should be followed by a seventy years' *desolation* and *anathema* of the land, under a seventy years' transportation and captivity of its inhabitants. God would give them over to the despotism of "*statutes that were not good*;" idolatrous laws and customs, in the dreadful experience of which, their own iniquities should make them know the difference between God and Moloch. Let any reader compare the first nine chapters of Jeremiah, also chapters xxxiv. and xlv., with Ezekiel v. 5-10, and xii. 19, 20, and xx. 23-36, and xxii. 15, 16, 31, and xxxvi. 17-21; and instead of wondering at the severity of God, he will adore with gratitude and love, the infinite riches of His patience, long-suffering, and tender mercy, and will take for the liturgy of his own soul, David's 103d Psalm, Hosea's 14th chapter, and Paul's 11th to the Romans. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God! O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help! O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!

“Will a man rob God?” asks the prophet Malachi: “Yet ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.” “If I be a Father, where is mine honor?” Had the Jews kept these institutes without interruption, the miracle of God’s protection would have been an irresistible demonstration to all nations. “And all nations shall call you blessed, for ye shall be a delightful land, saith the Lord of hosts.” The irregularity and neglect of these institutes was a robbery not only of God, but of the whole heathen idolatrous world; being defrauded of divine truth, by the disobedience of that royal priesthood, to whom God had intrusted His oracles. Yet our Lord’s first sermon in Nazareth (Luke iv. 18, 19), is a proof from Isaiah, of the existence of the jubilees in the era of that prophet, and of the complete fulfilment of their spiritual meaning by Christ’s Word; “this day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.” The testimony of Tacitus and Josephus proves also the known reality in their time, of the Sabbatical institutions, enactments and observances.\*

\* See “Josephus’ Antiquities,” book xiv. ch. 10., sec. 6. “Caius Caesar, Imperator the second time, hath ordained, that all the country of the Jews, excepting Joppa, do pay a tribute yearly for one city of Jerusalem, excepting the seventh, which they call the Sabbatical Year, *because therein they neither receive the fruits of their trees, nor do they sow their land,*” etc.

Compare also, “Tacitus’ History,” book v. sec. 4, 5. “The

*Past finding out*, and therefore inevitably a progressive searching and discovery through eternity, both in God's Word and works, both in theological and what is called natural science. But in neither can there be any possibility of progress, except by faith in God the Creator and Redeemer, and by that divine rule—"In Thy light shall we see light."—Ps. xxxvi. 9.

Consider the examples of incalculable minuteness and perfection in God's works, discovered only by microscopic research in the organized material universe; such as the predictions in a seed, the discovery

seventh day is sacred to rest, for on that day their labors ended; and *such is their natural propensity to sloth, that in consequence of it, every seventh year is devoted to repose and sluggish inactivity.*" It is remarkable that Tacitus notes the Jewish belief in immortality and a state of future rewards and punishments, as similar to that of the Egyptians. "With that people they agree in their belief of a future state; they have the same notion of departed spirits, the same solicitude and the same doctrine. With regard to the Deity, their creed is different. The Egyptians worship various animals, and also certain symbolical representations, which are the work of man; *the Jews acknowledge one God only, and Him they see in the mind's eye, and Him they adore in contemplation, condemning, as impious idolaters, all who, with perishable materials, wrought into the human form, attempt to give a representation of the Deity.* The God of the Jews is the great governing Mind, that directs and guides the whole frame of nature, eternal, infinite, and neither capable of change, nor subject to decay."

of four hundred lenses in the eye of the trilobite,—in that of the common fly, fourteen thousand, and multitudes of instances if possible more wonderful. But the forces, springs, and attachments in the spiritual universe, binding God's infinite plans, purposes, thoughts, words and works, in an eternal unity, must be immeasurably more marvellous; and they are referred to and exemplified in part, in such psalms as the 78th, those from the 104th to 107th, also the 139th and 147th. And in Isaiah, take the chapters from the 45th to the 55th inclusive, how overwhelming the array of internal evidences, beyond all possibility of human origin, or arrangement, or motive! God's vouchers are ever and anon unexpectedly brought into the sunlight by scientific investigations of the globe itself: the testimony of geology to the supernatural foresight and inspiration of the first chapter of Genesis, has become an illustrious example. The deciphered rock and brick libraries and wall-engravings of the ancient buried cities, Babylon, Nineveh, Thebes, the sepulchres, the temples, are indestructible vouchers for the Word of God. And it is remarkable that their discovery and interpretation should have been reserved, through so many ages of ignorance, to a period of wide-spread information, but also of popular and plausible attack against the Scriptures: just when the perfection of

scientific instruments, erudition, and sagacity, advancing gradually through so many centuries of experiment and conjecture, could be brought to bear upon the prejudices, unbeliefs, and *misbeliefs* of men.

Bishop Stillingfleet in his "ORIGINES SACRÆ," an inexhaustible mine of vast and accurate learning, combined with powerful reasoning and deep piety, has laid down, towards the conclusion of his great work, (vol. ii. pp. 521, 524) a canon of exegetical criticism as to the treatment of asserted contradictions in the Scriptures, than which nothing can be more just, though instanced by him particularly in chronological difficulties. He says, "Although the opinions of chronologers are *like the city clocks which seldom agree*, yet some come nearer the time of the day than others do; and therefore you ought to examine and compare them, before you pronounce so peremptorily about contradictions in Scripture, which you have no reason to do, till you find that no one hypothesis among them will serve to free the Scripture from contradiction: *for otherwise you do but blame the sun because you can not make the clocks agree.*"

In this age of vast missionary enterprises and responsibilities, God opens to His servants, as never before, "the treasures of darkness, and the hidden riches of secret places." This is seen in the accumulating developments of truth both in His Word and His works.

But as all genuine progress in science depends, (1), On the sincerity and accuracy of the investigator, in the study of the *works of an acknowledged CREATOR*, as in the examples of Newton, Faraday, Agassiz; and (2), On the discovery and proof of *facts*, and the inductions from them, not by conjecture, but demonstration;—so all true progress in theology depends on the earnest, accurate search of God's own Word, *with prayer for His guidance*. And he who has the closest communion with God, and the strongest and most absolute faith in Him, and in the unity of His works and Word, will be the most progressive, whether in science or theology, and in both to the same great end, that all men may learn to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. For neither in the works nor in the Word of God is there any possibility of contradiction, or mistake, or falsehood, or any thing but love, truth, and goodness. For God is love, and God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all, neither variableness nor shadow of turning. “For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen.”

XXXV.

FOSTER ON CHRISTIANITY AND SCIENCE—COMBINATION AND CONCENTRATION OF PROOFS IN THE COMPARISON OF PROPHETS AND HISTORIANS.

John Foster was perfectly justified in affirming "*that Christianity stands on a ground so independent of science, that nothing within the possibility of scientific speculation and discovery can essentially affect it.*"\* "*A train of miracles, attested in the most authoritative manner that is within the competence of history; the evidence of prophecies fulfilled, that the Author of Revelation is the Being who sees into futurity; the manifestation, in revealed religion, of a superhuman knowledge of the nature and condition of man; the adaptation of the remedial system to that condition; the incomparable excellence of the Christian morality; the analogy between the works of God and what claims to be the Word of God; and the interpositions with respect to the cause and adherents of religion in the course of the Divine Government on earth: this grand coincidence of verifications has not left the faith of the disciple of Christianity at the mercy of optics and geometry.* He

\* "Review of 'Chalmer's Astronomical Discourses,'" by Foster, in the "Eclectic."

may calmly tell science to mind its own affairs, if it should presume, *with pretensions to authority*, to interfere with His religion. He may content himself thus to repel the *arrogance* of science, when it intrudes in the spirit of a proud and inimical *interference*. But if, in a large and enlightened contemplation, it is found that science comes to be in harmony with religion, and even to subserve and magnify it, such tribute and alliance are by all means to be accepted."

The same may be said of the biographical sketches in the Old Testament, and especially the record of God's communion with such individuals as Abraham, Joseph, Moses, along with events found to have been the corner-stones, causal origins, and contemporary sanctions of all history.\* Then there are the

\* The tricks of credulity in some men's minds are fantastic beyond the descriptions of Shakespeare. We find Prof. Tyndall, in his book on "Fragments of Science," arguing against the miracles recorded in the Old Testament, as "the *credulous prattle of the ancients*, which, if it stood alone, were it not locally associated with words of imperishable wisdom, and with examples of moral grandeur unmatched elsewhere in the history of the human race, both the miracles and their evidences would have long since ceased to be the transmitted inheritance of intelligent men."

But who, in those ancient times of ignorance, inspired the imperishable wisdom, and the examples of moral grandeur, and secured the words and the miracles and their benevolent pur-



monumental, geological, philological, chronological, and occasional festival proofs; the handwriting of events that have scored their unobliterable demonstrations in the races, character, and history of all mankind. Sometimes all these signatures of divine truth are inextricably interwoven in a combination, the idea or possibility of which, or the thought that the actors in their day knew of it, or were producing it, never entered, nor could have entered, the imagination beforehand. The thing is as entirely a discovery of later centuries, as that of the continent of North America, or the existence of coal-mines as a repository for fuel, or the discovery of steam-power for navigation.

poses and beneficent effects, as the transmitted inheritance of the highest intelligence of mankind through all ages?

The same "Scientific Imagination" that rejects the reality of a prayer-hearing and miracle-working God, embraces the possible evolution of a mind such as Abraham's, as being the growth of matter from eternity by Natural Selection! And other minds growing out of Abraham's, till the transmitted inheritance culminates in an example of perfection for the imitation and salvation of mankind! A pattern of moral grandeur, which nevertheless is itself no miracle, but only a *protection of the prattle of the ancients*, from an unbelief and scorn otherwise inevitable in the progress of science. Is it within the limits of possibility for combined credulity and incredulity to go further than this?

Two of the most remarkable instances of such combinations may be found, (1) on comparing the prophecies of Jeremiah, chaps. vii.-xlv, and their indisputable historic corroborations and consequences, downwards through the captivity, with the prophecies of Ezekiel, and the book of Daniel, chapter ix., with II Chron. xxxvi. 21, and Neh., chaps. viii., ix. No sceptical criticism has ever succeeded, and none ever can, in casting the shadow of a doubt over these demonstrations.

The second instance is equally impregnable, in comparing Lev. xxiii., Deut. xviii., and Neh. viii. 14, with the dedication of the Temple by Solomon, and the words of Christ in Matt. xxi. 13. This is the witness of events, institutions, books, writers, predictions, and fulfilments, through a thousand years, running back from 445 before Christ to 1490, the date of the appointment of "the feasts of the Lord," in the wilderness. These feasts were intended to be God's vouchers, "to bring to remembrance"; and the enumeration of them closes with the *seven days' feast of booths*: "That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God. And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the feasts of the Lord."—Lev. xxiii. 43, 44.

A thousand years after this record we find the children of Israel returned in Jerusalem from the captiv-

ity,—people, priests, Levites, and Ezra the scribe, with Nehemiah the governor,—reading and hearing *the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel, from the morning until midday.*—Neh. viii. 3. “And on the second day they found written in the Law which the Lord had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths, in the feast of the seventh month.”—Neh. viii. 13, 14. Four hundred years later we find Christ in the temple at Jerusalem, restoring it by divine authority to its original spirituality and sacredness.

Here the whole historic record, minute and undisputed, is a voucher of the strongest possible kind, interwoven with circumstantial details, impossible to have been forged, which details present a succession of organic proof engravings, and intersections or imbeddings, as of insects in a mass of amber, or the annual growing rings of forest trees, or water-marks in the construction of the paper on which a will is written, securing the dates from all possibility of forgery. It is a texture of the vouchers of God’s providence and grace, combining a whole nation, with their priests, leaders, and scribes, in the celebration of a long interrupted festival, in obedience to the law of God by Moses, promulgated a thousand years previous.

In connection with and illustrative of this historic

recital, we take the corresponding passages from Kings, Isaiah, Haggai, Jeremiah xxxi., xxxii., xxxiii., and Ezekiel xx. 10–26. The divine covenant, the violation of it, the consequences of that guilt, and still the Holy Spirit of God not withdrawn, but renewed, out of divine compassion, to bring the nation and the individual sinner to repentance. Let the reader remember the revealed characteristics of God's long-suffering and mercy from the beginning (for God is love), and so let him read Ps. cxviii. 22, 27, I Kings viii. 43–53, with Isaiah lvi. 6, 7, and Matt. xxi. 13. The combined testimony of David, Solomon, Isaiah, and Christ, as to the central covenant of God, with the soul in faith and prayer.

Isaiah lix. 21—“This is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My SPIRIT that is upon thee, and My words which I have put in thy mouth shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, *saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever.*”

Haggai ii. 4, 5—“Be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord; *and work, for I am with you,* saith the Lord of hosts. According to *the word that I covenanted with you, when ye came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remaineth among you; fear ye not.*” Compare Ex. xxix. 45, 46, and Lev. xxvi. 9, 42, 45, 46, and Deut. iv. 31.

Neh. ix. 13, 14, 20, 30—"Thou spakest with them from heaven; *laws, statutes, and commandments*;—and madest known unto them *Thy holy Sabbath*, and gavest *bread from heaven*. Thou gavest also *Thy good Spirit to instruct them*." What conceivable element of a life-giving and sustaining, infallible revelation can be added?

Inexhaustible provisions of eternal life; the seed of life, the bread of life, the harvest of life; seed for the sower and bread for the eater; neither fear nor possibility of famine. Light seen in God's light; life lived in God's life; in Him as the fountain of life, and in His presence as the experience of the fulness of joy. This, nothing less, nothing earthly, is the eternal covenanted inheritance of souls, taking God at His word, and believing in Christ accordingly, and thus securing the indwelling of Christ, filling the soul with all the fulness of God.

No such array of vouchers was ever known or imagined for any transactions or writings on earth. None were ever possible. The whole race of mankind, with all their powers of intelligence, design and execution concentrated for a thousand years, could no more have produced, or caused to appear, such a testimony as that contained in Neh. vii.-x., combined with Ezra ix.-x., and the passages referred to in Isaiah, Haggai and Ezekiel, than an association of

scientific men could create the universe.\* Even as the heavens and the earth are vouchers of God's creative power and glory, and the heavens are still telling, and the days and nights speaking,

\* See on this argument the profoundly illustrative and instructive commentaries and introductory essays of Prof. Taylor Lewis on Genesis, Ecclesiastes and Job, with his admirable Metrical Translations of the two latter books. No other writer has ever brought the riches of a vast learning and the sagacity and penetration of a searching and comprehensive spiritual logic, taught by the Holy Spirit, to bear with such impressive solemnity upon the infinite eternal lessons given to mankind in these portions of the Word of God. "It is sometimes admitted," says he, "by the most thoughtful men of science, that the more knowledge we get of nature, and of man as a purely physical being, the greater the doubt, perplexity, and despair in respect to his destiny, unless a higher light than that of the natural and historical is given for our relief. In this respect, the modern physical knowledge has no advantage over the ancient, which it so much despises, but which, in its day, and with its small stock of physical experience, was equally pretentious. Our modern science, with its most splendid achievements, which there is no disposition to underrate, stands speechless and confounded in the presence of the real questions raised in the book of Ecclesiastes! What single ray of light has that science shed on any of those great problems of destiny, which are ever present to the anxious thoughtful soul! 'Our science and our literature!' How is their babble hushed in presence of the grave! 'And how great is the darkness that hangs over the problem of the human and the mundane destiny, when illuminated by nothing higher than science and philosophy, either ancient or modern!'"

“Forever singing as they shine  
The hand that made us is divine ;”

so these events, and the record of them, are God's vouchers, impossible to have been constructed or presented but by God. As matter itself is but a divine prism, constructed for created intelligences, and letting in on man's mind through his senses the intermediate rays whereby the invisible Creator may be known, so the happening and the record of events from Adam to Christ constitute a divine prismatic revelation of God's redeeming attributes and truths. And when Christ Himself appears, He gathers up and presents in His own person all the divine vouchers, demonstrating and teaching, by His own personality, as God manifest in the flesh, THE WORD FOREVER SETTLED IN HEAVEN.

All these truths for all mankind, carry us, by a divine necessity, to the great appointed Judgment Day for all, when these books of judgment and of destiny, shall be opened, and the dead shall be judged out of the things written in the books. And the last certainty of that judgment itself is thrown upon this one necessity for the government of God, of having His justice demonstrated to all beings through eternity. “That Thou mightst be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest.”—Compare Romans iii. 4-6.

Here then, we have an approximating balance between the weight and worth of the truth as it is learned in Christ, and the denial of it, as against Him. "He that sinneth against Me wrongeth his own soul. All they that hate Me love death." The jurors for this crime are selected by God Himself, as declared in the great prophetic psalm of judgment. "He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people. Gather My saints together unto Me;—*those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.* And the heavens shall declare His righteousness; for God is judge, Himself."—Ps. l. 4, 5, 6. Compare this with Christ's own words, "He that confesseth Me before men, him will I also confess before My Father and the holy angels." The covenant of God by sacrifice is in every confession of Christ before men *the covenant of ransom and redemption*, as in Psalm xlix. 7, 8, and the result of belief in it; the sacrifice of a broken spirit presented by the contrite soul, with the assurance and joy of God's salvation, upheld by His free spirit, as in Psalm li. 12, 17. These coincidences of the known reality of God's covenant with mankind by sacrifice, and its eternal efficacy for salvation, strike in by so many and such complex attachments in the history of a thousand years with the witness of the consciences of all mankind, and even of their idolatrous ceremonies and superstitions from Egypt down



to Rome, that all possibility of forgery or misunderstanding is precluded. The destiny and danger of the soul for eternity are as evident a possession of human thought and knowledge, as in the parables of the Saviour. The Covenant of God in Christ, and the consequences of rejecting it, of not taking refuge in it, are equally indisputable, and make our mad delay and doubt the greatest of our crimes.

“The solar shadow, as it measures life,  
Should not each dial strike us as we pass?  
Should not each warning give a strong alarm?  
Too soon man’s hour is up, and we are gone!  
Gnomons are useless, when the sun is set;  
And such our gravitation to the wrong,  
So prone our hearts to whisper what we wish,  
Our watches still go slower than the sun,  
And all mankind mistake their time of day.”

YOUNG’S “Night Thoughts,” B. II.

## XXXVI.

A DIVINE REVEALER ADMITTED, THAT WHICH HE REVEALS MUST BE INFALLIBLE—THE REVELATION MUST BE IN WORDS AS INFALLIBLE—THE CLAIM OF INFALLIBILITY, FATAL TO ANY PRETENDER—GOD ALONE CAN SAFELY MAKE SUCH CLAIM—ONLY GOD IN CHRIST DEMONSTRATES IT.

Some anxious sceptics say, You must not take too high a position as to inspiration; for it may yet be found that facts are against you, and in that case, all your Christianity is gone. Science will yet bore and analyze the globe to the antipodes, and some central monkey may yet be found in the transition state, the very missing work of evolution, pawing the ground, as Milton's imaginary lion, half out, half in; and that will be fatal to our Lord's exposition of Genesis. If mistake and error are proven you will have to relinquish the claim of an infallible inspiration; but if not infallible, then not inspired; admit therefore, beforehand, the probability, of error in the inspiration, otherwise we may lose all.

But an inspired falsehood is impossible. Of what use or authority could be such a volume? No man's certificates in it could be accepted. Did I not sow good seed in my ground? from whence then hath it

tares? An enemy hath done this! God Himself has never sown any thing but truth.

The argument from the divine attributes, from the character of Christ, and the needs of mankind as a sinful race, whom He came to redeem by truth and love, admits of nothing less than infallibility in His teachings. Any thing opposed to this, or dependent on men's opinions, destroys all possibility of redemption. "*He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.*"—Isa. liii. 9; and I Peter ii. 22. Are these witnesses destitute of all common sense as well as sincerity? Have they abdicated reason, while appealing to it? A divine revelation, and at the same moment a spirit of falsehood, an inspiration breathing guile, and assuming destructive error as divine truth, in deliberate copartnership with the passions, prejudices, and purposes of sinful men, are irreconcilable. Dr. Lindsay Alexander justly affirms that, "It is the MERE PHRENZY OF INFIDELITY to reject Christ's instructions on the plea that He sacrificed truth to gain the favor of His countrymen. The same spirit that urged the Jews to seek His crucifixion lies at the source of this audacious attempt to malign His character and discredit His teachings. It is impossible to adopt this theory of accommodation, and still retain any confidence in Christ or His ambassadors."\*

\* "If God sent His Son into the world," says Herder, "could He not send Him with infallible tokens? Could He not at least

Obviously, the claim of infallibility could be safely made only by the Omniscient, and if made by any pretender, *the claim itself* would ensure the discovery of the falsehood. It would lead inevitably to the sharpest, most critical, most inimical scrutiny, which could never cease, but would be renewed in every generation, by those who long to throw off the yoke of such a claim, and to put the Christian Scriptures on a level with the Zend-Avesta and the Koran. Such is the fire of inimical criticism to which the Word of God is subjected continually. Every generation builds a new furnace with improvements, kindles a new flame, and smelts the Word of God in new crucibles. If there had been any falsehood in it, or any possibility of convincing it of error, any connivance with selfishness and fraud, sentence against it would have been confirmed long ago.

guard Him and His witnesses against adducing evidences which were erroneous? If we grant the honesty of Christ, and suppose Him to have been misled, even in so much as the adduction of a single prophecy which did not properly relate to Him, but which He cut to suit His own purpose by accommodation, how came God to accredit Him by miracles?—by that greatest of miracles, His resurrection? Would He build us a trap bridge between deceit in interpretation and honesty in conduct? It would be the most perilous bridge ever built, not for the Jews only, but for all the people in all times, into whose hands the Old Testament and Christianity should come.”—Alexander’s “*Congregational Lectures and Appendix*,” pps. 201 and 502.

Just so, if Jesus Christ had not possessed on earth the infinite holiness of the Godhead, if in His *humanity* there had not been the absolute perfection of *God manifest in the flesh*, His own challenge, *Which of you convinceth Me of sin?* would have been fatal to His cause, ensuring an inquest *unendurable by any human being*. And so, when the Divine Word comes to men with the same triumphant challenge, *Which of you convinceth Me of error?* inasmuch as it comes revealing the wrath of God from heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men, it ensures the reaction and retaliation of justice against itself, if it teaches *any thing but truth without error*. Inasmuch as it comes revealing an eternal retribution in the wrath to come, and commanding all men to flee from it, and to take refuge in Christ as the ONLY SAVIOUR, it enlists all the opposition of the love of sin, unbelief and sharp hatred, by the anger of thwarted idolatry, covetousness, ambition, and a sensual selfish will. We will cast their cords from us, by proving that what pretends to be divine inspiration is only the bigotry of human falsehood. We will demonstrate their fabrications, and break their bands asunder, as Samson did the green withes of the Philistines. And this they could easily do if the Bible were in any part woven out of falsehood. A book denouncing *all deceit* on the part of man, as a crime to be visited with endless

penalty, could not escape the same retributive justice due to itself, for the crime of *teaching deceit in the name of God.*

Now then the case stands thus: "The wrath of God is revealed in the Word of God against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, *who hold the truth in unrighteousness.*" Except this be divine inspiration, it is human falsehood and weakness. There is no wielding of this sword of the Spirit but by absolute certainty. The truths are such that they must be proclaimed on God's sole authority, or they have none at all. They can not be revealed or enforced on man's endorsement. An endless penalty can be taught only by God, and taught infallibly.

Once taught, it is the key to all other teaching, the reason for all other. Once revealed, there follows *the obligation to proclaim it everywhere, at all hazards, and in full.* "That which ye have heard in the ear, proclaim upon the housetops," fearing neither man nor devil. What had previously been to you but dimly revealed, or in the trembling whispers, fears and doubts, half-uttered, of what has been called natural religion, proclaim as the thunder from heaven; flee from the wrath to come, for the wages of sin is death!

The reasonings of Christ, the parables, the illustrations, hold by this great truth, are grounded in it, spring from it, as conclusions from the premises.

Take even only the case of the man delivered to the tormentors till he should have paid the uttermost farthing, compared with the requisition in our Lord's prayer. "So shall My Heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every man his brother their trespasses." The point is, that there is a *continuance of retribution*, and the soul that hath committed the trespass *bears the retribution*, and is *consciously* bearing it, *coeternal with the trespass*. The only escape is in the casting of the soul by faith upon the Lord Jesus for the remission of all sin.

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XXXVII.

WHAT GOD HAS BESTOWED, WHAT WE HAVE  
GAINED, AND HOW TO USE IT.

It would require a combination of the sagacity of minds such as those of Plato, Aristotle, Bacon, Butler, Pascal and Edwards, to set in one volume even an index of the array of irresistible proofs from human experience, from the history of man and of the plan of redemption, and from God's works, animate and inanimate. These proofs, culminating in Christ, and read by His Spirit (which is the gift promised to all through faith and prayer), are such in their vastness and power, so mightily prepondera-

ting over all doubt that can be presented to shake the convictions of an immortal being, and so filling and satisfying the greatest minds, as to justify the conclusion by Dr. Arnold of Rugby that "*before a confessed and unconquerable difficulty in the Christian system (for he accepted none other), his mind reposed as quietly as in the possession of a discovered truth.*"

This conclusion is legitimate, from Christ dwelling in the heart by faith, but in no other way than in Him, the Way, the Truth, the Life, and in His divine, infallible, eternal love. Because God has been thus manifest in the flesh, and justified in the Spirit, and has thrown back upon the past the light of the Creator's own testimony, and forward over the future the light of His own government of mortal beings for eternity; has thrown it for man's guidance and education, in view of his destiny in an eternal world; has thrown it in such absolute certainty for a believing mind, that all apparent contradictions and difficulties are lost in the brightness of the moral demonstration of God's goodness, truth, and love: therefore we thus confidently and forever rest in Him.

There are plenty of difficulties, perplexities, and things requiring long and vast research, in the domain of external learning and historical investigation. But the A, B, C, the alphabet, the key and command of eternal life are in the meek and lowly heart, at the



use of the humblest and most illiterate mind; without opportunity of academic or college education, and, without leisure for gymnastic intellectual exercises. In the realm of love, and of the confidence that love produces, all things are clear, and many of infallible intuition, needing neither profound study nor a piercing genius, nor a great library of many tongues, but only an ordinary reason, and a loving and believing heart.

“The cottage dame that sits at her own door,  
Pillow and bobbins all her little store,”

and the Bible all her learning, conquers the brilliant Frenchman, be he Renan, or Voltaire, or Bayle, with their encyclopedias of knowledge and logic, wit, sarcasm and facts.

The logic of the great Russian Poet, Derzhavin, in his sublime ode to the Deity, deflagrates, even in one line, the manufactured diamonds of learned materialism and doubt—

“I AM, O GOD; AND SURELY THOU MUST BE!”

And yet, this logic, this unanswerable, irresistible axiom, is just simply the reason and lisping intuition of the little child, even the babe and suckling, out of whose mouth God perfects praise, and the Author of Faith completes His own demonstration of Himself.

It is the child's soul in God's Temple, and Christ Himself His own Temple in the soul.

“I am, O God; and surely THOU must be!  
Even from the throne of Thy Divinity,  
The chain of being is complete in me.  
In me is matter's last gradation lost,  
And the next step is spirit,—Deity!  
Thy light, Thy love, in their bright plenitude,  
Thou SPIRIT of my spirit, and MY LORD!”

Because God will have men to trust in Himself as their Saviour, and rest on His word of promise, and not on any chain of scientific reasoning, as of facts ascertained by the senses, but on His Word in simple faith; therefore is the moral and spiritual demonstration so overwhelming, the historical and scientific so open to dispute. But the moment we have received into the depths of our souls the shadows of the great mountains of God's truth, the reflection of their dazzling summits, as in a calm lake the snow-crowned Alps are reverberated, then all the arguments of infidels, all the questionings of doubtful minds, are only as light fleeces of cloud would be in a clear day, between our vision and Mont Blanc in Switzerland.

The argument from Christ in the gospels is more convincing, more overwhelming, more expulsive of the possibility of delusion or mistake, than a range

of alabaster mountains would be to the sight, reaching from earth to heaven. All the objections that have ever been evoked out of the brains or workshops of scientific philosophers, or the encounter of stumbling blocks fit to grind men to powder, go for nothing. Take the Scriptures at every disadvantage, and they can bear any amount of blundering, misinterpretation, assumption of false premises, obstinate holdings of prejudice, distortions, rackings on the wheel;—and yet, the demonstration of Christ in these gospels, as the power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation, shall no more be obscured or weakened, than the sun could be darkened by scattering a vial of pagan incense into the air.

If we were shut up to the very letter of Genesis, and had no margin of time for our interpretation, no allowance but just one week of days of twenty-four hours each, it would still be more likely that all the demonstrations of geology were mistaken, than the Bible false; more likely that all the fossils of the rocks, all the microscopic infusoria, shells, chalk, and coral reefs and mountains, were created just as they are, and in one day, than that Christ was an impostor.

The argument of religious truth, completed in Christ, is a more conclusive, irresistible demonstration, than any argument from science ever possibly can be. It involves no impossibility to suppose the

world created in one day, or fossils created as fossils, or coal beds as coal beds. But it does involve an impossibility to suppose that Christ was an impostor, because that supposes God Himself a liar, and that supposes no God.

There is no God, unless He be a God revealing Himself; no Creator, unless He be a God caring for the good of His creatures; a God protecting and blessing those whom His power and wisdom brought into being.

If there be God a Creator, there must be God a Revealer, and a revelation from Him; and man must know it. But there is no such revelation, save only in the Word of God. If that be not a revelation from God, men have none, and never had, and never can have. It is attested by all conceivable seals of appeal and proof to human reason. A revelation can not be made to a reasonable creature unless that which is given in the Word of God be it.

### XXXVIII.

PAUL'S INSTRUCTIONS AND TIMOTHY'S EXPERIENCE—  
THE WORD A SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH—THE EDU-  
CATION AND TRAINING REQUISITE FOR THE EF-  
FECTUAL MINISTRATION OF TRUTH—ORIGINAL  
CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE, BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, IN  
FAITH AND LOVE, BY THE INDWELLING OF CHRIST  
IN THE HEART—SCOTT'S "FORCE OF TRUTH"—  
CONFESSION OF CHRIST BY THE DYING THIEF.

It is recorded of Timothy's education for the min-  
istry that from a child he had known the Holy Scrip-  
tures, which were able to make him wise unto salva-  
tion *through faith in Christ*. That *unfeigned faith* dwelt  
in him, by the Holy Spirit, through the Word of God,  
and in accordance with it. This is so universally true,  
that the touchstone of a Christian experience always  
is *its dependence upon and accordance with the Word of  
God*. The Spirit of God does not come down from  
God with a new revelation from eternity, nor bring  
to the soul things from the eternal world not revealed  
already in the Scriptures, but *shuts us up to God's own  
Word*. There is such a reality as Christian experi-  
ence; we know that; and it comes from the Divine  
Spirit, from the power of God, but *never apart from  
the Word of God*. This is a testimony of wondrous

power from God Himself as to the divinity of His own Word. It is the enshrinement of the whole revelation that God has been pleased to make, and to that enshrinement He not only *refers the soul*, but Himself goes to it as the medium still of all His intercourse *with the soul*. Whatever windows are opened in heaven, He opens through His Word; whatever communications are made by the Divine Spirit are made through the Word; and in the work of convincing, disciplining, changing and sanctifying the soul, the sword of the Spirit is the Word of God—See Isaiah lix. 21, and I Peter i. 23.

So God always doth and always will discipline us, teaching us our dependence equally upon the Word and the Spirit, and the impossibility of knowing the one without the other, of experiencing the life of the one without the life of the other. The Word of God understood and kept by the Spirit of God in the heart, is the life and power of the Christian and the Church. It is the source of individual knowledge and experience in the things of God. It is the fuel and the flame of divine life and love in the soul; and the truth by the Spirit of Love is the only element of power with which the Church can act upon the world; not the truth merely, but the truth by the Spirit. Hence the vast and solemn responsibility of the Church to gain and to keep the Spirit of God, that

the truth of God in His love may be kept and applied by the Spirit. "It is the gift of *the grace of God according to the effectual working of His power.*" And this is the application of the prayer that God would grant you, according to the riches of His glory to be strengthened with might by His Spirit, etc.—Eph. iii. 16–19. This baptism with the fire of divine truth by the Spirit is the perpetually renewed pentecostal baptism. It fills the Church with the divine presence, and raises up a ministry of divine efficacy. It carries forward the individual to his work for Christ in great power and glory.

It guides and governs the man, not the man it. It may lead him into trial, may throw him into conflict with angry enemies, but he shall ride prosperously because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness, and God's right hand shall teach him terrible things, and his arrows shall be sharp in the heart of the king's enemies. There may be conflicts which will be very painful; nevertheless, God's living Word sweeps him on, and he must proclaim it, he can not cease. "I am in derision daily," says Jeremiah, that faithful, perpetual martyr to divine truth; "every one mocketh me. For since I spake, I cried out. I cried violence and spoil, because the Word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me, and a derision daily. Then I said, I will not make mention of Him,

nor speak any more in His name. But His Word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." When the Word of God thus takes possession of a man, thus burns in him, it conquers and impels not only him, but others.

But there is a great individual labor behind this fire, and requisite for it; it comes never by chance, nor by human learning, nor by the letter merely, but by the Spirit. A man may have the fuel, the letter, before him and all around him, in plainness and abundance, and yet know nothing of the fire, the power. And hence David says, "Mine eyes fail for Thy Word, saying, When wilt Thou comfort me?" And again, "Take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; hide not Thy commandments from me." Hide them not? Fail for Thy Word? Why, the Word was plain before him, very nigh him, in his hand at that very moment, and he turned it over as we do now; meditating on it even through the night watches; and yet he exclaims, "Mine eyes fail for thy Word; I see it not, it is gone from me." He means that he can do nothing with it, it is worth nothing to him, except his soul is quickened by it, except he knows it by the Spirit, feeds upon it in its spiritual and eternal meaning, has it hidden and burning in his heart. Then and so, it is God's Word,



and he can speak it; but if he loses the Spirit, he loses the Word. He has to pray, "Open Thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Thy praise. Uphold me by Thy free Spirit, *then* will I teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee. Make me to understand the way of Thy precepts; *so shall I talk* of Thy wondrous works." That is the first and grand element of power, eloquence, and success in the preacher, whether his sphere be public or private in that Royal Priesthood, which Peter describes as constituted by the Church. This is the primal, grand, essential requisite, that the Christian disciple everywhere be able to speak of God and of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, and of heaven and of hell, from the Word of God, by his own original, deep, powerful experience. Brought down to the Gospel, this is "*the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ.*" If the man would be a living preacher, nothing will answer at second hand. Where the Spirit stops, his knowledge stops, his power ceases.

The business of the Christian teacher, therefore, under such responsibility, is to be strong in these two things,—the WORD of God, and PRAYER. A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven; nothing is an element of life and power, except it be so received, except he get it from God. It should be

our constant daily effort, our great desire and prayer, we will not say, to go no farther in knowledge than we can go in experience, but to have every thing, even the least things in God's Word, ministered to us by the Spirit. Oh, the greatness and glory of that power! That ministration is glorious; "not with ink merely, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart." We want it every step of the way, that nothing may be of the letter merely, which killeth, but of the spirit that giveth life. This is the ministration which the child of God is bound to keep up, this habitual receiving of the Divine Word from heaven, from the Spirit of God, the Revealer, the Comforter, the Sanctifier.

The Word of God might not improperly be described as a spiritual telegraph, but in every case the message must come direct to the soul, and can not be reported at second hand. The believer, the Christian, in the exercise of faith, looking to God and waiting, must stand himself, watching for the sacred intelligence. Sometimes he stands, or seems to stand, sorrowfully waiting for a message that does not come. Has he given notice to the operator at the other side? If he has not, then how can he expect an answer? He must send his message: if he does not, he might stand and watch the telegraph wires or machinery all day, and it would not move for him, or with any intelligence to

him. And just so, the soul, inquiring at God's Word, must breathe forth its prayer after God, must advertise God, as it were, that the sinner is there, waiting for a message, waiting for the Holy Spirit to flash a life and meaning along the wires, to convey the spiritual intelligence through the letter of the Word.

Here is a man crying, Mine eyes fail for Thy Word, saying, When wilt thou comfort me? Well, if you could stand by him and observe, waiting a little longer, by and by, if you could hear as he hears, there would be a click, click, click, in the machinery, and the pen would be seen dotting and notching its signals, in a language for the soul, which the soul rejoices to find uttered; the utterance of the Spirit, without which the word, the letter of the word, was as destitute of celestial intelligence and comfort, as are the wires of an electric telegraph.

There is all this difference between knowing by the Spirit and by the letter merely, or the natural heart, like that between the telegraph and the post. If you live on the line of the telegraph, where there is an office of communication and a knowledge of the signs, you may be in correspondence in a moment, at ever so great a distance: but if you are only on a postroad, then the most important intelligence may be carried to a city a thousand miles further off in space than you are, before it can reach you, and it will have to be

interpreted for you by letter, and brought to you by mail. Just so, the heart in communion with God by the Spirit is an office of heaven's telegraph; the wires are the Word, instinct with the flame of the Spirit that pours divine intelligence into the soul. But to others the same things have to be conveyed by letter from those to whom they have been telegraphed.

If your favorite commentator has received his understanding of the Scriptures by the Holy Spirit in the heart, attending and interpreting the letter, he is so far to be relied upon, but no farther. "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit."

Scott's "Force of Truth" is one of the most instructive books on this subject ever written. He was himself one of the safest, most practical, useful, and instructive commentators of his day. He says, in one of his letters to Dr. Ryland, "The Lord preserve us from *the pride of learning and abilities!* If we once think ourselves competent to understand the Bible by dint of our own sagacity, and skill in languages and criticism, without an immediate and continual dependence upon the teaching of the Holy Spirit, we are within a few paces of some dreadful downfall."

When Abraham was on the Mount of Temptation in the trial of his faith, he said, "My son, God Him-

self will provide a Lamb for a burnt-offering." Wonderful prophecy of Christ's coming and death for the sins of all mankind! The whole Gospel was there, and in it Abraham saw Christ's day, and was glad. Then came Job, with his supernatural faith, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Then Moses with the Passover, and the types, predictions, confessions, and instructions of the Ceremonial Law, "Our school-master unto Christ." Then David and the Messianic, penitential and believing Psalms. Then the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah; "All we like sheep have gone astray: but the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Then John the Baptist, greatest of the prophets, "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world!"

Thus for ages Jesus was a reality *only to faith*, exercised by chastened and childlike men, "taking the cup of salvation, and calling on the name of the Lord,"—faith only in God's promises to guilty lost sinners, and in the symbolic utterances of priestly sacrifices, and the ceremonial theology of the Divine Law, with its accompanying miracles, the Rock, the Cloud, the Fire, the Manna, and the Word from heaven. So, the just shall live by his faith. And that faith in a Saviour to come, illustrated and demonstrated by the confidence of the dying thief in a dying, yet ever-living Saviour, on the cross, the most

triumphant, consoling, supernatural instance, to the praise of the crucified Son of God, since the world began, was as good for every ancient soul, humbly and obediently trusting God, as Paul's, Peter's, John's, Luther's, Bunyan's, ours. "*Hath done nothing amiss*"; that was the whole triumphant creed, against Satan, sin, temptation and despair (which is the last possible crime of the guilty soul), in the dying thief's confession concerning Christ.

But the reasoning of this creed was not, Let us therefore imitate His moral perfections, and so be saved by His moral virtues, but, Let us therefore trust in Him alone, to save us *just as we are*, without any plea but *His merits and His death*. There was no time for habits of obedience by *imitation of Christ*; but there was time for faith in His *mercy to the chief of sinners*, time to confess Christ, and *trust in Him before the sons of men*, under the most awful and contradictory testimony of guilt and conscience, sense and science, *compulsory of despair*, that ever shut down upon and darkened the death-scene of a soul. Yet against all this, taught by the Holy Spirit, he threw himself upon Christ's mercy, praying that great prayer, while his failing vision could still behold the Holy Lamb of God, his dying Saviour, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom!" Most wonderful revelation of the whole comfort and

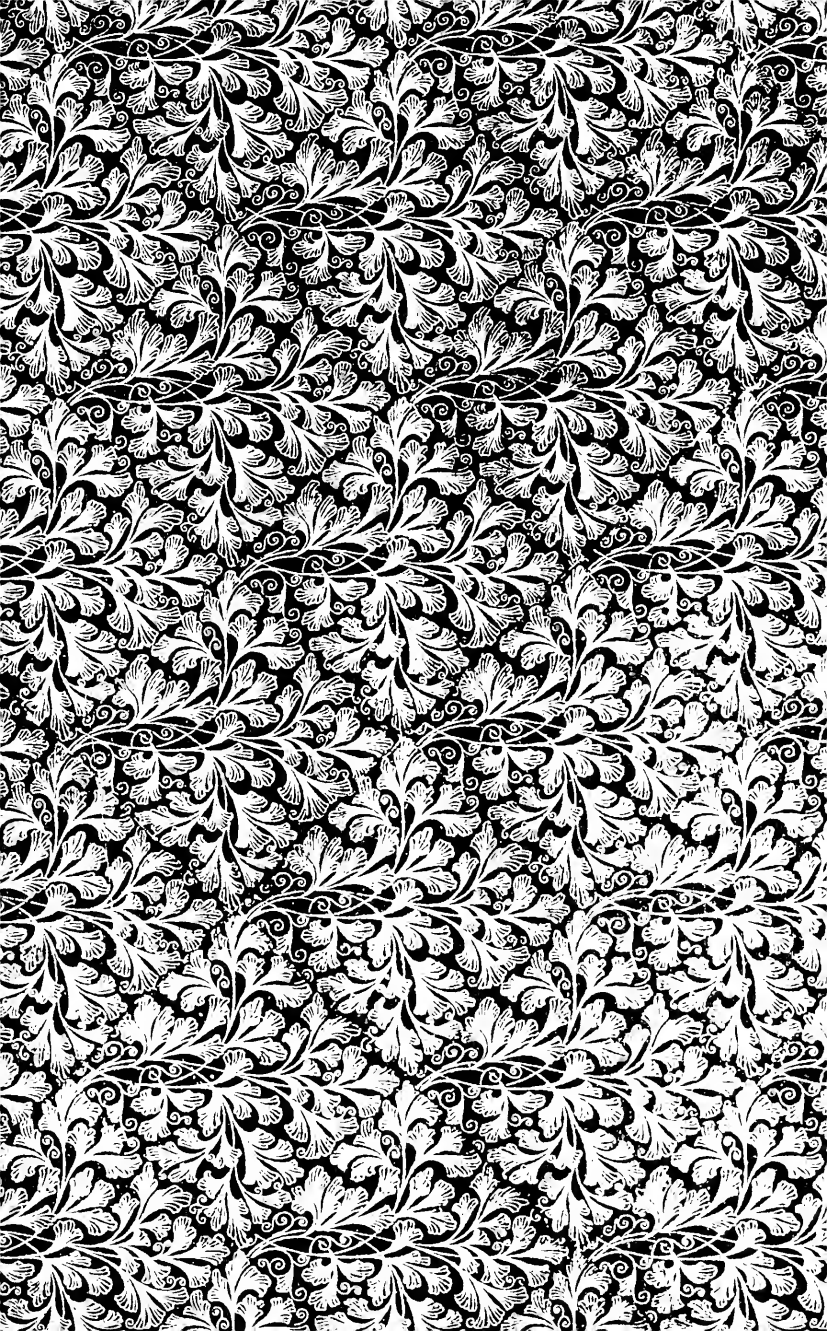
power of the Gospel! And so, confessing Christ before men, this dying sinner fulfilled the conditions of justification unto life, and ascended with his Redeemer into Paradise. And this man's prayer, and the martyr Stephen's crying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," are the only death-scenes of believers presented for our instruction in the New Testament.





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